



Harper's BAZAAR

SEPTEMBER 2026

MAKE AN ENTRANCE

Step out in playful silhouettes, theatrical make-up and showstopping jewels

WINGED VICTORY

Cate Blanchett's triumphant return to the stage

ALESSANDRO THE GREAT

Meet Valentino's master of couture









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LOUIS VUITTON

A woman with dark hair pulled back is sitting in a lush green field. She is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved jacket with gold buttons and a matching skirt. She is holding a small, green handbag with a white floral pattern and a silver-tone Dior logo. The background is a dense forest with tall trees and green foliage. The word "Dior" is written in a large, black, serif font across the middle of the image.

Dior





GUCCI







CHANEL





CHANEL

PRADA









Cartier





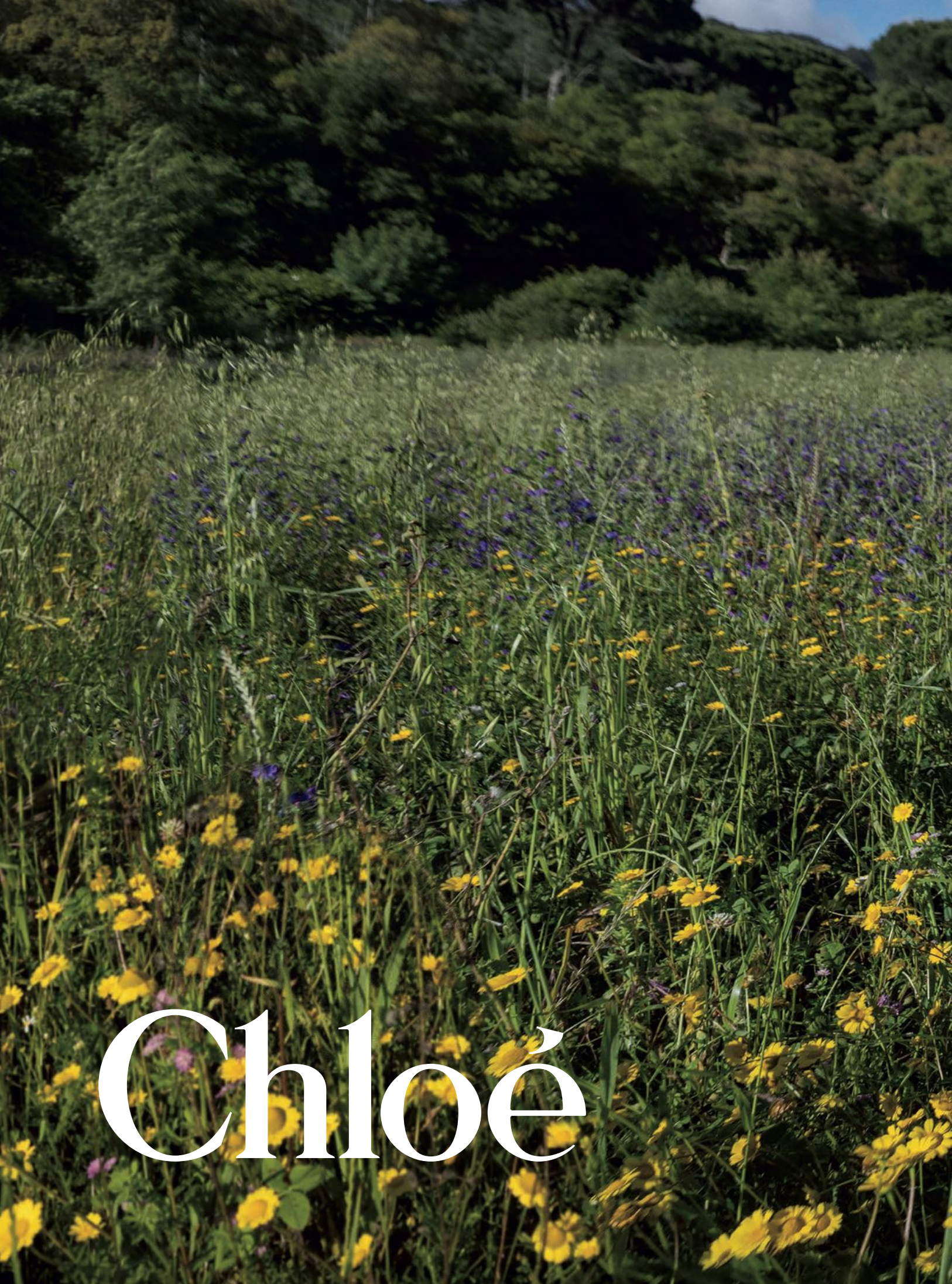
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FOR ADVERTISING AND EVENTS ENQUIRIES, EMAIL

sharon.davies-ridgeway@hearst.co.uk

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RALPH



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Contents



Cate Blanchett wears Louis Vuitton in this month's cover story

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COVER LOOK Cate Blanchett wears embellished leather cape; matching dress, both from a selection; leather heels, £1,060, all Louis Vuitton. White gold and diamond earring, from a selection, Louis Vuitton High Jewellery Mythica collection. Styled by Charles Varenne.

Hair by Sam McKnight, using Hair by Sam McKnight. Make-up by Val Garland at Streeters. Manicure by Abena Robinson at Agency 41. Photograph by Emma Summerton



STYLE

- 47 **THE TREND REPORT**
Savour all the colour, vibrancy and elegance of the autumn/winter 2026 catwalk shows
- 55 **STYLE FILE**
The designer *Susie Cave* loves kindness, shoes and Isabelle Adjani
- 57 **ASK AVRIL**
Bazaar's fashion director solves your dressing dilemmas

JEWELLERY

- 59 **HIGH PROFILE**
Scintillating diamonds, rubies and sapphires to add attitude to your eveningwear
- 68 **ACHORUS LINE**
Show-stopping fine-jewellery collections from the world's most prestigious maisons

AT WORK

- 80 **A COURT OF HER OWN**
Brooke Theis talks to the changemaker Eva Omaghom, an advisor to King Charles and a creator of opportunities for all. Plus: advice and resources to turbocharge your career

TALKING POINTS

- 85 **COLOURS OF MAGIC**
The cultural highlights of the month, including the artist Rachel Spelling's *Bazaar*-inspired artworks; Gillian Anderson's intriguing horror movie; the starry return of *Call My Agent!*; and must-read novels for autumn

LIVING

- 97 **HEIGHT OF CHIC**
We take a tour of Elle Peugeot's treasure-trove Paris apartment. Plus: stylish collaborations for the home, featuring Emilia Wickstead, Erdem, Oswald Boateng and Zoë de Givenchy; and catwalk colour to transform your kitchen
- 107 **MODERN LOVE**
A cornucopia of mid-century pieces to elevate your interiors

PHOTOGRAPHS: EMMA SUMMERTON, ERIK MADIGAN HECK



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L O N D O N





FENDI





ETRŌ

PALAZZO MONTI
Artist Residency



GRAFF

THE MOST FABULOUS JEWELS IN THE WORLD

FEATURES

- 110 **WOMAN OF PARTS**
Our cover star Cate Blanchett tells *Sasha Slater* about fashion as performance art and her return to the National Theatre
- 160 **DIVINE TIMING**
Alessandro Michele on following in the footsteps of the great Valentino
- 170 **JOHN DONNE AND OTHER CATWALK ICONS**
The author *Katherine Rundell* reveals how literary figures of the past inspire her wardrobe choices

FASHION

- 128 **WILD AND FREE**
A 32-page portfolio featuring the most covetable looks from the A/W 26 collections

BEAUTY

- 176 **BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY**
The make-up artist Peter Philips summons the spirit of the 1970s with glorious greens and gold
- 185 **WHAT KATY DOES**
Bazaar's beauty director shares her expert advice
- 186 **THE BEAUTY EDIT**
Our favourite gadgets, from an LED face mask to a hi-tech hairdryer
- 187 **BEAUTY MOODBOARD**
Parfumeur par excellence Oliver Polge on his latest zesty fragrance

ESCAPE

- 190 **JUST THE TWO OF US**
Douglas Booth and *Bel Powley's* heavenly Maldives honeymoon
- 194 **TIGER COUNTRY**
Lydia Slater heads to India in search of the enigmatic big cats
- 196 **ANIMAL MAGNETISM**
Beatrice Aidin's Serengeti safari
- 198 **INSIDER'S GUIDE**
Designer *Huishan Zhang* on Qingdao

REGULARS

- 40 **EDITOR'S LETTER**
- 44 **CONTRIBUTORS**
- 202 **FLASH!** London's hottest parties
- 218 **WHY DON'T YOU...** sample the fruit of the gods, courtesy of Chanel?



Editor's letter

SEPTEMBER 2026

If you're anything like me, you will find it a challenge to switch your wardrobe seamlessly from holiday mode to meet the demands of the new fashion season. After months in sandals, my feet shrink from high heels, my sun-dried hair is in a state of permanent frizz and the prospect of a waistband seems unacceptably constricting.

Fortunately, *Bazaar's* September issue has come to my rescue, covering everything I need to know to be back in the swing of things: we have trend reports on fashion (from page 47), beauty (from page 175) and jewellery (page 59), culminating in a 32-page fashion shoot featuring highlights of the latest collections (starting on page 128). Meanwhile, on page 160, the multi-talented designer Alessandro Michele, now reinventing the house of Valentino, gives a rare exclusive interview on his process to Alexander Fury; then on page 170, the bestselling author Katherine Rundell explains her own idiosyncratic fashion philosophy.

And, of course, our cover star Cate Blanchett is as used to winning best-dressed accolades as acting gongs. Fashion, she tells us, 'is a performance art, with an emphasis more on performance than art', and she demonstrates both in an extraordinary shoot by Emma Summerton, in which she plays multiple roles and is photographed in dialogue with herself as well as with us. Looking at the story, I was reminded that the first

rule of fashion is that it should be playful rather than painful – so I'm diving back into my wardrobe with fresh enthusiasm.



Lydia Slater

LYDIA SLATER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Cate Blanchett wears
Jean Paul Gaultier and
a headpiece by Stephen Jones
Millinery in this month's
cover story (page 110)



£3,250,
Valentino at
Net-a-Porter



From a selection,
Valentino Garavani

EDITOR'S CHOICES

Having resolved to have more fun with fashion, I'm leaning into Michele's Valentino, in which elegance is spiced with a touch of wit and whimsy.



£2,400, Valentino
at Mytheresa



£4,990,
Tasaki

From a
selection,
Chanel
Watches



£790,
Valentino
Garavani at
Net-a-Porter

THIS MONTH, I ENJOYED...

Bazaar's Wellness At Sea cruise on Cunard's *Queen Anne*
The vibrant Frida Kahlo exhibition at Tate Modern
Lying in a hammock, gazing at the sky

Harper's
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P R I V É

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TASAKI

danger!





ASHOKA

BOODLES

1798

Contributors



PAGE 110

CATE BLANCHETT

As the star returns to the London stage for a thrilling dual-role performance in the new play *Electra/Persona* at the National Theatre, she sits down with Sasha Slater to discuss acting, AI and academia.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'I take my shoes off. I feel much more grounded when I'm barefoot.'

Your best fashion investment 'With my first paycheck, I bought an Armani suit that I still have and wear.'

Who is your style icon? 'Diana Vreeland.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'Sake and olives.'

To find inspiration, I... 'go for a walk. When I arrive somewhere new, I have to get out and explore.'



PAGE 85

RACHEL SPELLING

As part of an exciting new collaboration with *Harper's Bazaar*, the artist has delved into our archives to create an exclusive print titled *Shades of Flat and Lustre Finishes*. In Talking Points, she shares her journey from mural painter to miniaturist, as well as a first glimpse of the work.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'I have a black blazer from the 1940s that fits perfectly. Anything feels possible when I wear it.'

Who is your style icon? 'Juliette Binoche.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'A spicy margarita.'

To find inspiration, I... 'get up early on a Sunday and go to a car-boot sale. It's bliss and floods me with new ideas.'

MEG MASON

Already established as a novelist in Australia, the New Zealand-born writer Meg Mason made a global splash with *Sorrow and Bliss*. She talks to our literary editor Erica Wagner about her next novel, out this month.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'High-waisted trousers in a structured fabric. Anything drapery makes me feel strangely fatigued.'

Your best fashion investment 'With my first book advance, I bought a Jérôme Dreyfuss Billy bag, which I still love.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'A coupe of Taittinger (flutes are so awkward), then another straight afterwards.'

To find inspiration, I... 'walk around London, letting myself take any street that looks interesting.'



PAGE 80

EVA OMAGHOMI

A culture strategist and communications expert, Omaghomi spent 17 years as an adviser in the Royal Household. Last year, she left her post there to found her own consultancy, Forster Jones & Associates, as well as Brand63Africa, a platform for luxury African fashion. In At Work, she discusses her varied career and future.

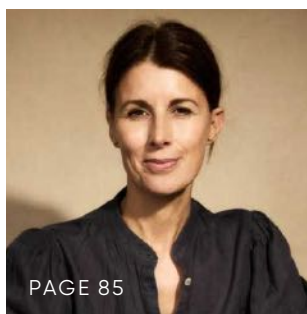
What do you wear to feel powerful? 'My hair has to be on point. I have natural Afro hair and it's part of the outfit.'

Your best fashion investment 'A school friend of mine called Bethlehem Teshome made me a deep-red kimono-style cardigan in Italian mohair about 20 years ago, and it has lasted so long. People still ask me where I got it.'

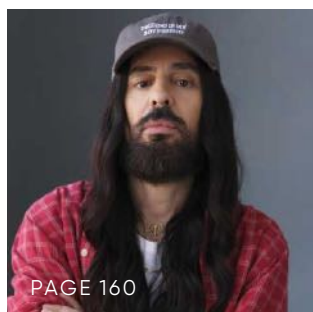
Who is your style icon? 'My mother and grandmother. They looked phenomenal.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'A rum punch and spicy nuts.'

To find inspiration, I... 'travel and people-watch.'



PAGE 85



PAGE 160

ALESSANDRO MICHELE

The Italian fashion visionary led Gucci into a dazzlingly maximalist era during his tenure at the helm of the house; now, as the creative director of Valentino, he's establishing another startling revival of a legacy brand. Alexander Fury speaks with him inside the brand's Roman headquarters.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'Nothing, because I'm not sure the word "powerful" really belongs to me. I believe in a beautiful pair of comfortable shoes for a long, lovely walk.'

Your best fashion investment 'My very old Hermès Kelly bag.'

Who is your style icon?

'[The 1926 novel by Luigi Pirandello] *One, None and a Hundred Thousand*.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'Blueberry juice.'

To find inspiration, I... 'live.'

ELLIE PEUGEOT

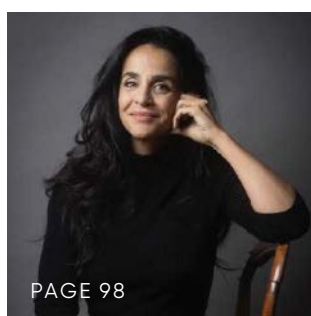
After a career as a human-rights lawyer in London, Peugeot moved to Paris and carved out a surprising second act as an interior designer, specialising in high-end residential projects within historical buildings. In our Living section, we peek inside her own Paris apartment.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'My Dior Bar jacket. On the days I need strength, it does the heavy lifting.'

Your best fashion investment 'A good tailor. I buy quite a bit of vintage and the hunt is half the pleasure.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'A pisco sour.'

To find inspiration, I... 'used to visit fine-furniture auctions in the UK. I told myself it was research. Eventually, I made this habit my career.'



PAGE 98



PAGE 190

BEL POWLEY AND DOUGLAS BOOTH

The acting couple first met on the set of the 2016 film *Mary Shelley* and married in 2023; after a two-year delay, they headed to Soneva in the Maldives for their honeymoon. In 'Just the two of us' they recount their long-awaited romantic escape.

What do you wear to feel powerful? DB: 'A clean pair of pants is always a good start.'

Your best fashion investment BP: 'A vintage Versace navy wool-silk blazer. I have a lot of blazers, but this is the one! I wear it almost daily.'

Who is your style icon?

BP: 'Charlotte Rampling.'

What's your aperitivo order? DB: 'A dirty martini before dinner, no snack. A martini with a twist after dinner.'

KATHERINE RUNDELL

A bestselling author whose novel *Impossible Creatures* won the Children's Fiction Book of the Year in 2024, Rundell has also published a biography of John Donne, on whose work she wrote her doctoral thesis. She is a Fellow of St Catherine's College, Oxford, and can occasionally be found climbing across the city's rooftops. In this issue, she reflects on the enduring relationship between literature and fashion.

What do you wear to feel powerful? 'My grandmother's engagement ring. She was brilliant and ferocious.'

Your best fashion investment 'A black greatcoat by Margaret Howell. It reconciles me to bad weather.'

Who is your style icon?

'James Baldwin.'

What's your aperitivo order? 'Whisky sours and popcorn.'

To find inspiration, I... 'read John Donne.'



PAGE 170



Vivienne Westwood

Vivienne Westwood AW2627 photo by Juergen Teller



BAZAAR

style

EDITED BY
GRACE CLARKE

The trend report

A new mood is sweeping across the fashion landscape, one that is beribboned, embellished and lots of fun. It's time to say yes to excess

STYLE



CLOSE FITTING

Sharp shapes are the order of the day. Crisp, clean lines and tailored style always look chic: simply transition from pretty floral prints and cropped trousers to cuffs, collars and waistcoats as the season changes.

LOUIS VUITTON



SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO



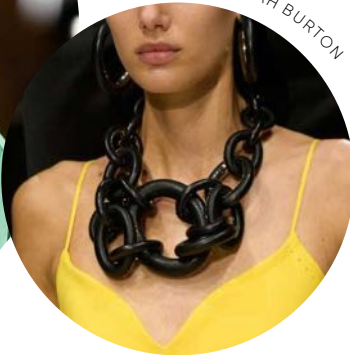
VALENTINO



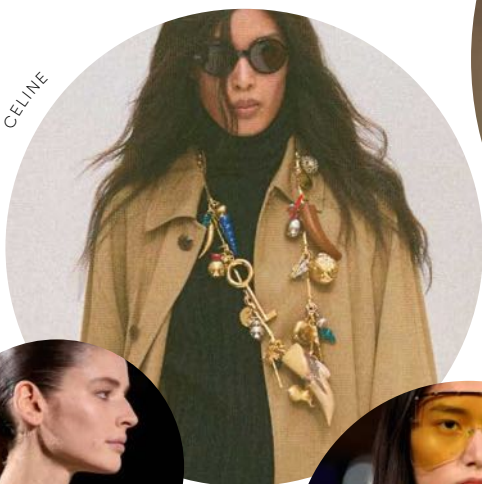
MCQUEEN



GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON



CELINE



VALENTINO



BOLD BEADS

Go big or go home: this is the year of the chunky necklace. Whether you choose Sarah Burton's oversize chains or Chanel's colourful collars, there's a style for every personality.

CHANEL



CHANEL





PATTERN PLAY

Why match when you can clash? Heavy prints, dramatic colours and statement stripes are the cool-girl code of the season – wear in infinite combinations and stride boldly into autumn.



FRINGE BENEFITS

Nothing says drama like a touch of tassel: go for gold like Schiaparelli, or embrace an outré accessory courtesy of Stella McCartney.



STYLE



THE GLOVES ARE ON

Make every event feel like a night at the opera when you model a maxi glove with a coat or evening gown.



EXTRA EXTRA

This season's catwalks had beads, sequins and embellishment galore. Bedeck yourself in ribbons à la Simone Rocha, or take your cue from Celine and treat fashion as armour, styling top-to-toe chainmail with a trench for a bold day-to-night look.



COOL TO BOOT

Above the knee or below, this season's footwear is anything but boring: why not channel Marie Antoinette's style and lace up in Prada's feathered boots?



FLAPPER FORWARD

Dropped waists, dramatic skirts and sleek silhouettes put a modern twist on the aesthetic of the Roaring Twenties. Play with proportions by layering an oversize blazer over a fringed or pleated skirt.

Texture is the simplest way to elevate your winter look: just add feathers, fluff and faux fur to your ensemble for instant impact.

Texture is the simplest way to elevate your winter look: just add feathers, fluff and faux fur to your ensemble for instant impact.



An angular approach was in evidence at the shows, with bold geometric lines giving extra emphasis to strong, generously cut outlines.

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LYDIA SLATER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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STYLE FILE

SUSIE CAVE

The designer sips jasmine tea, douses herself in rose oil and can't stop buying shoes



My style signature is... topping and tailing. Black shiny hair and black patent shoes.

The brands that best represent my style are... Susie Cave Weddings & Funerals and white Dickies overalls.

My style icon is... Isabelle Adjani, especially in *L'Été meurtrier* (*One Deadly Summer*). Everything about her in that film has stayed with me: the way she looks, the costumes, the atmosphere, her wildness, her vulnerability.

My best fashion investment is... shoes. Whether I'm dressed up or down, if I'm wearing a beautiful pair of shoes, I always feel my best, no matter what else I have on.

The item in my wardrobe that I couldn't live without is... Niparons nipple covers. I wear them instead of a bra because I find bras so uncomfortable. I love to feel free!

My signature scent is... rose oil. Kylie Minogue always smells beautiful because she wears it too.

My favourite work of art is... any of my husband's beautiful ceramics. I also love everything by Thomas Houseago: he's a dear friend and has given us wonderful works over the years we've known him, particularly an owl sculpture that I treasure.

The greatest style advice I ever received... 'Head held high and fuck 'em all.' It was my mother-in-law's mantra.

The piece of jewellery that means the most to me is... my wedding ring. It hasn't left my body since the day of the solar eclipse, back when we got married in 1999.

My most used beauty product is... anything by Officina Santa Maria Novella. I've been devoted to the brand for as long as I can remember. Nick adores it too.

On my bedside table I have... bioidentical hormones.

The last book I read was... *Chéri* by Colette – my hairdresser recommended it!

The rule I live by... Be kind. Always.

I have a collection of... shoes, many of them rare pairs from designer friends: Vivienne Westwood, John Galiano, Haider Ackermann. Whenever Nick wants to buy me a present, I ask for shoes, and he always says: 'Oh no, not again.'

The last thing I bought and loved was... an Alaïa handbag. In my opinion, Azzedine Alaïa was the greatest designer.

The indulgences I can't live without are... jasmine tea, milk chocolate and my husband.

The place that means most to me is... my bed. My favourite ritual is to have a bath, cover myself in body oil while my skin is still damp, climb into the crisp white cotton sheets and fall asleep.

'Susie' by Nick Cave, with photographs by Dominique Issermann (£35, Thames & Hudson), is published on 16 September.

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The past few months have been busy for *Harper's Bazaar's* membership club. From our glamorous soirée at Rosewood London in June to an afternoon of opera and picnicking at Glyndebourne in August, we have enjoyed a host of exclusive experiences in the company of like-minded women. Join now to gain access to our autumn events programme, including our London Fashion Week celebration, Power Salon series and the famous *Bazaar* Art party.

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ASK AVRIL

Our fashion director *Avril Mair* makes light work of your wardrobe quandaries

Do I really need a wardrobe refresh just because it's a new fashion season?

The short answer is no. Normalise re-wearing the things you like again and again. If you buy well and wisely, this should build a wardrobe that lasts – it also means that you're never panicked by an invitation or dress code. I pick up things I love when I see them, not when I need them, so I *always* have something to wear and never succumb to a last-minute Zara dash. My shopping is split evenly between vintage, designer and high street, but I'm constantly looking for pieces that will stand the test of time. Styling is how you make things feel fresh: sometimes a new accessory can transform everything, particularly if it's a bit unexpected or, as fashion folk like to say, 'off'. For A/W 26, I plan to invest in a pair of red Chanel heels that match nothing so will go with everything – scarlet is the colour of the season.

I've just started a new job where my office is considerably smarter. Can you suggest some workwear to invest in?

More than anything, the key is to feel comfortable in yourself. What you want is a sense of ease, but also some structure: a fitted jacket with loose satin trousers; a one-and-done dress; a midi-skirt with a short-sleeve jumper. Whatever your style, you can adapt it to workwear. On the high street, COS and Jigsaw are brilliant at office-appropriate clothes – and don't forget M&S, especially for shoes. At a slightly higher price point, Me + Em and the Fold excel at tailoring, both in interesting colours and neutral shades. These cropped palazzo pants (pictured, right) could be worn in a dozen different ways.

I've set aside savings for a new handbag, but I don't know where to start: it needs to be functional yet chic, and look good for years to come. What should I buy?

Rather than opting for big-logo luxury, turn your attention towards the Brits. We have quite a reputation for well-crafted, fairly priced purses – helpfully, many of these brands have been championed on the international stage by Catherine, Princess of Wales. You should know Strathberry



already, but there are others: DeMellier, Métier, Aspinall of London and, of course, Mulberry. With Christopher Kane as the new creative director and a LFW show scheduled for September, it's time to reconsider the iconic Bayswater bag.

I'd love a statement skirt for autumn. Are there any good high-street options?

Fashion's maximalist mood comes courtesy of Matthieu Blazy at Chanel, whose collections are infused with an infectious sense of joy. It's a total vibe shift and everyone wants in. Alas, it's yours at significant cost. If you can't quite invest in his major midis, look to H&M, or else All Saints, whose tiered asymmetrical skirts are a perennial favourite. The brand has just appointed the young east-London talent and LVMH Prize finalist Aaron Esh as chief creative officer, so expect more catwalk-adjacent looks soon. □



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stated. White
gold and
diamond
earrings, VAN
CLEEF & ARPELS

High profile

Diamond adornments are the pinnacle of chic statement-making this season

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LAI STYLED BY HOLLY GORST

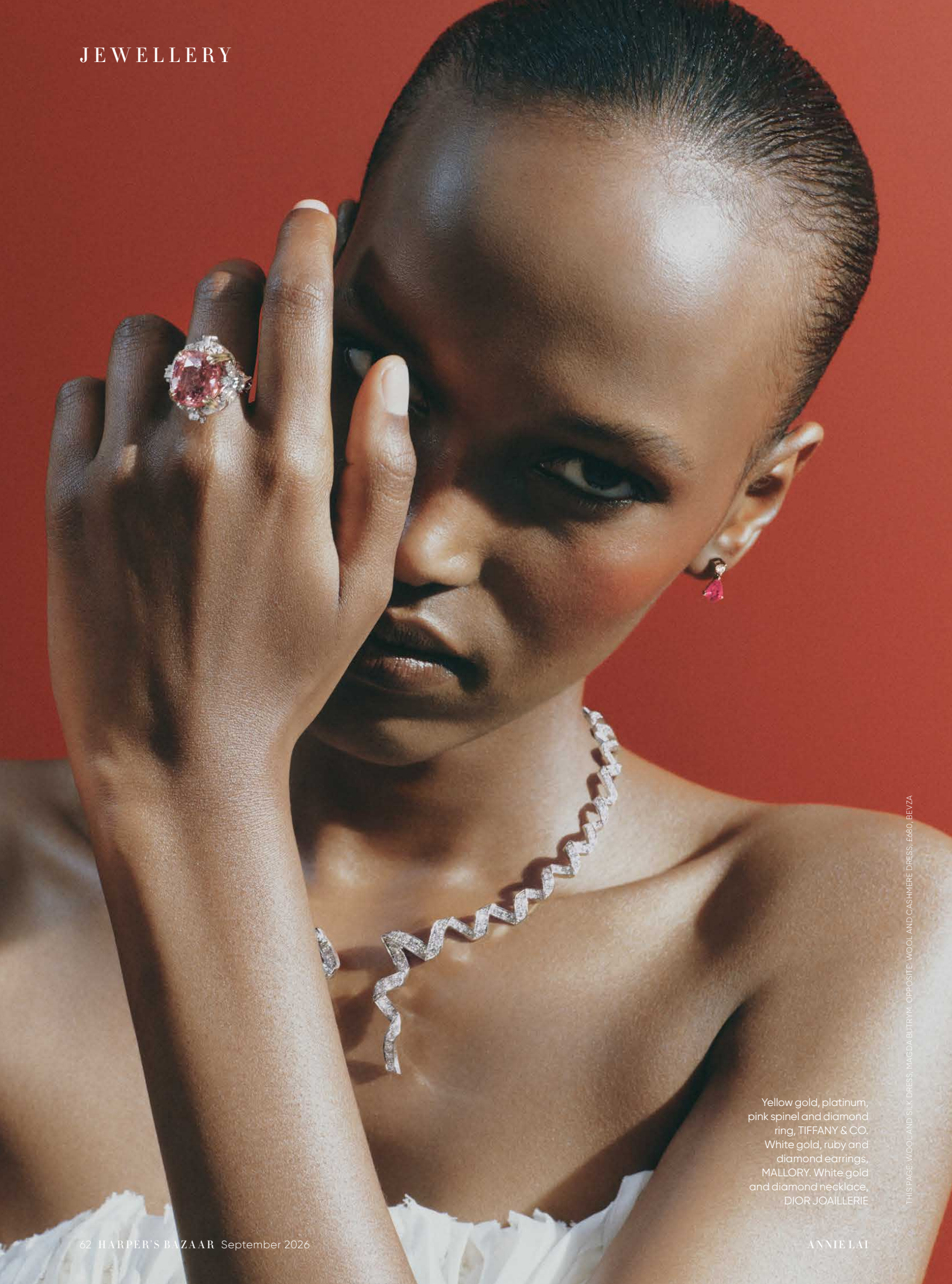
White gold, diamond,
emerald and onyx
earrings, CARTIER





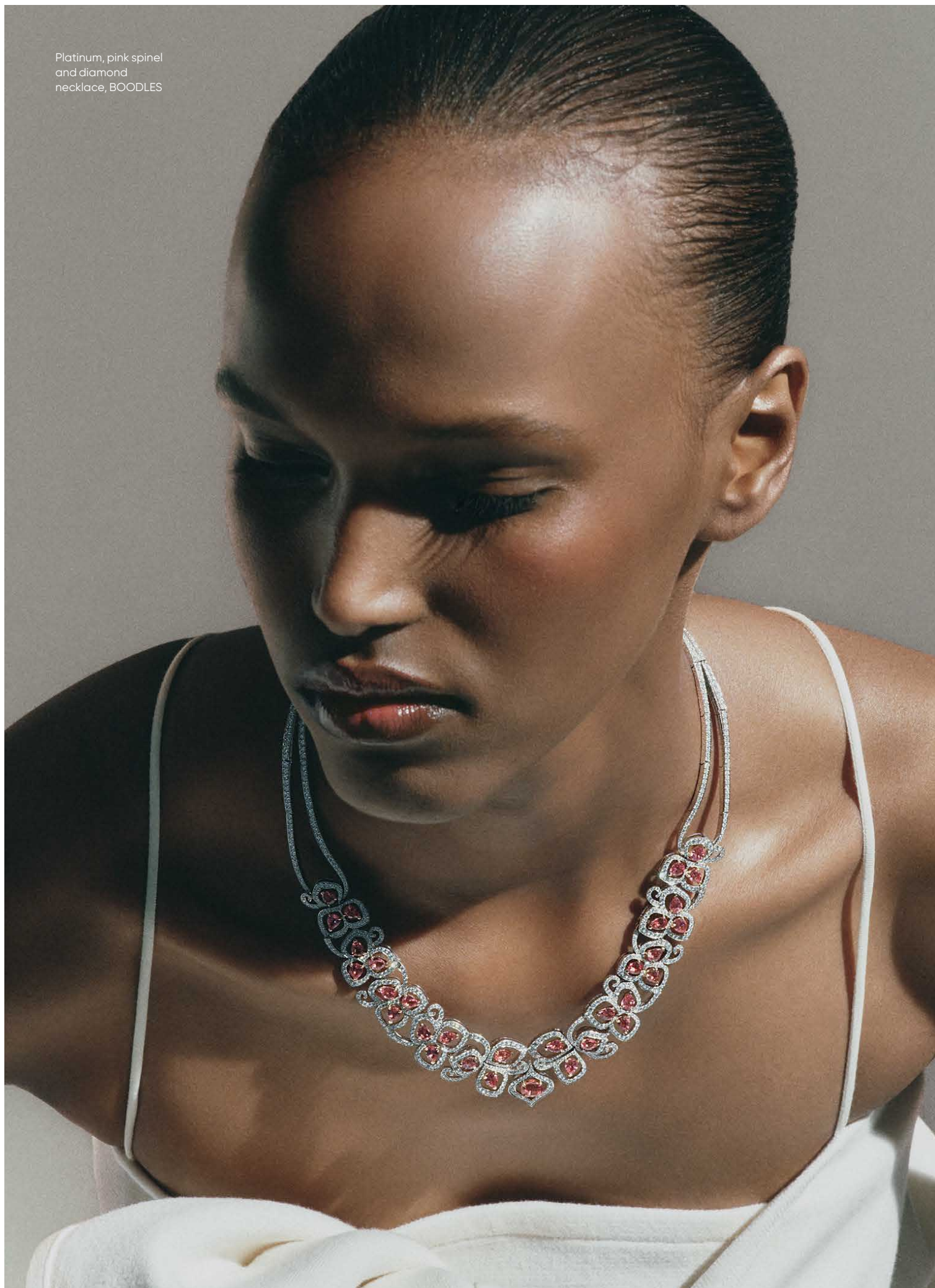
THIS PAGE: WOOL BRA, JIL SANDER. OPPOSITE: SILK TOP, CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION

Left hand, from top:
white gold and
diamond ring, FOPE.
White gold
and diamond ring,
CHANEL HIGH
JEWELLERY. Yellow
and white gold,
tourmaline and
diamond ring (right
hand), BUCCELATTI.
White gold and
diamond necklace,
DE BEERS



Yellow gold, platinum,
pink spinel and diamond
ring, TIFFANY & CO.
White gold, ruby and
diamond earrings,
MALLORY. White gold
and diamond necklace,
DIOR JOAILLERIE

Platinum, pink spinel
and diamond
necklace, BOODLES



A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a black strapless dress, is shown in profile, resting her chin on her hands. She is wearing large, rectangular, multi-tiered diamond earrings. On her left hand, she wears a ring with a large diamond and a pearl. On her right hand, she wears a ring with a large diamond and a ruby. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

White gold, white
emerald and diamond
earrings, GRAFF.
White gold, diamond
and pearl ring (left
hand), TASAKI. Yellow
and white gold,
ruby and diamond ring
(right hand), BULGARI

Platinum, ruby,
pink sapphire and
diamond earrings;
matching necklace,
both HARRY WINSTON

THIS PAGE: CASHMERE BODYSUIT, £660, SILK SHAWL, £4125, BOTH MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION. OPPOSITE: DUCHESSE SATIN DRESS, £21

JEWELLERY

White gold and diamond ring (left hand), CHOPARD.
Rose gold, platinum, red and pink spinel, ruby and diamond necklace, PIAGET. Pink gold, diamond and rhodolite ring (right hand), BOUCHERON.
Hair by Yoshi Miyazaki at Debbie Jones Management, using Hair by Sam McKnight.
Make-up by Victoria Martin, using Rare Beauty.
Manicure by Jasmin Samavati at One Represents, using Elemis.
Stylist's assistant: Gloria Madenge. Set designer: Joseph Burke.
Model: Maryamo Musse at Premier Model Management





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A CHORUS LINE

Note-perfect gemstones strike
a harmonious chord

In Cartier's high-jewellery collection Le Chœur des Pierres, everything centres around superlative stones. From Colombian emeralds to uniquely shaped diamonds and sparkling topazes, gems are the focus and inspiration. 'Each is an encounter, an alchemy that resonates with our vision and our quest for the Cartier ideal,' says the director of high-jewellery creation Jacqueline Karachi-Langane. 'The creation serves the stone, revealing its nuances, its brilliance, its sparkle and its inner vibration.' The collection spans 125 pieces, requiring more than 85,000 hours of work. In the masterpiece pictured here – the Haryma necklace – a jewelled tiger prowls over five glorious imperial topazes. **AVRIL MAIR**

Necklace,
from a
selection,
Cartier Le
Chœur des
Pierres
collection



REIN AND SHINE

These gleaming Hermès creations take inspiration from the house's equine motifs

A high-jewellery collection titled Into the Horsescape could only be imagined by Hermès. With a great deal of wit and an equal amount of savoir-faire, the label's creative director of jewellery Pierre Hardy offers a sophisticated, self-assured ode to the maison's spirit animal. 'Its symbolism lives within each piece,' he says. Glittering and graphic, the 90-strong collection – his ninth for the house – juxtaposes utilitarian objects, from saddles to stirrups, with precious stones and delicate handiwork. An extraordinary bracelet features ends with hooves in baguette-cut diamonds and black spinels. And there is, of course, a horse: an articulated ring designed to sit over the finger, created in white and brown diamonds with pink opal and yellow gold. **AM**



All pieces, from a selection,
Hermès Into the
Horsescape collection

MAGICAL THINKING

Dior conjures an otherworldly universe
with turquoise and emerald blossoms

Exquisitely presented in a catwalk show at the Palazzo del Casinò, featuring 20 exclusive couture looks created by Jonathan Anderson, Diorissima is a high-jewellery spectacle worthy of its Venetian setting. Designed with masterful audacity by Victoire de Castellane, the artistic director of Dior Joaillerie, the 141-piece collection mixes abstraction and naturalism, exploring three extraordinary worlds: lush greenery, aquatic depths and celestial constellations. The pieces are crafted using the doublet technique, which involves layering one jewel over another, bringing the designs to glittering life. **AM**

Earrings; bracelet; brooch, all from a
selection, Dior Haute Joaillerie Diorissima collection



Necklace; earrings; brooch,
all from a selection,
Louis Vuitton High Jewellery
Mythica collection

RISE AGAIN

Louis Vuitton's epic collection epitomises rebirth, with the fiery phoenix as its muse

Celebrating the Louis Vuitton woman as the heroine of her own story, Mythica is a collection of 110 pieces that dazzle with exceptional stones and craftsmanship. Across 11 themes, the goddess narrative plays out through mythological symbolism and decadence. The CEO Pietro Beccari calls it 'a celebration of time itself – stones have travelled for millions of years to be here, their journey continuing through generations to come'. Seen here, the Triumph theme is designed around the rise of the phoenix, the wings sculpted in gold V shapes, entwined with ropes of white gold, fully pavé-set with 1,350 diamonds. **AM**

LA GRANDE BELLEZZA

A paean to Rome, this Bulgari presentation
draws on the city's eternal allure

Bulgari's ambitious new high-jewellery presentation Eclettica is an exercise in audacious imagination. Subtitled 'A Living Dialogue with Art', it takes inspiration from sculpture, painting and architecture to offer 150 pieces created with spectacular gems. 'Rome is a place where centuries of art co-exist and constantly generate new beauty. Eclettica distils this spirit,' says the CEO Jean-Christophe Babin. At the heart of the collection are nine masterpieces: this is the Secret Garden necklace, evoking the city's hidden courtyards and featuring a rare 26-carat pink-orange sapphire, while the Incontro Segreto ring is influenced by Francesco Hayez's painting *The Kiss*, with its pairing of an eight-carat diamond and a five-carat emerald. **AM**

Necklace;
ring, both
from a
selection,
Bulgari High
Jewellery
Eclettica
collection





EARTHLY DELIGHTS

Bees buzz and saffron crocuses bloom in
Chaumet's glittering vision of paradise

Titled *A Journey Through Nature*, Chaumet's bewitching new high-jewellery collection is a vibrant tribute to the botanical world. It's a fitting theme: the French maison, known since its founding in 1780 as the naturalist jeweller, cares deeply about the environment and works with wholly traceable raw materials and ethically sourced stones. The result is a series of beautifully conceived, colourful designs, among them 25 brooches featuring bee and honeycomb motifs, and seven pieces that pay tribute to saffron, executed in yellow diamonds and enamel. **AM**





Brooches, both from a selection, Tiffany & Co. Hidden Garden collection

NEST EGGS

Tiffany's latest offering is a feathered fantasia of colourful jewels

A celebration of nature in full bloom, Hidden Garden is the new chapter in Tiffany & Co's Blue Book, an enchanting collection that portrays verdant secret worlds. Created by the chief artistic officer Nathalie Verdeille, it pays homage to the brilliance of the maison's legendary designer Jean Schlumberger through scintillating motifs of flora and fauna. A series of brooches reimagine the famous 1965 Bird on a Rock design, each featuring a fantastical creature perched atop a precious gemstone. **AM**

LUCK BE A LADY

Van Cleef & Arpels' signature charm gets a feminine update in pretty pink

Few pieces of jewellery are as iconic as Alhambra. Van Cleef & Arpels launched its four-leaf-clover symbol in 1968 and it has since become the maison's lucky charm, constantly reinvented with different materials, from onyx to porcelain. Catherine, Princess of Wales has walked the red carpet in a mother-of-pearl version; now, there is a new iteration featuring translucent pink enamel, enlivened with tiny bubbles that offer an unusual depth. The result of years of research and development, the set includes two necklaces, a pendant, a bracelet and earrings. 'Thanks to our workshops' capacity for innovation,' says the brand's president and CEO Catherine Rénier, 'enamel brings an original aesthetic and shade to the Alhambra universe.' **AM**

Necklace, earrings, both from a selection, Van Cleef & Arpels Alhambra collection

RELIGIOUS ECSTASY

Spiritual symbolism is at the heart of
Dolce & Gabbana's Sicilian masterpiece

Presented in the San Domenico Palace in Taormina, once a Dominican convent, Dolce & Gabbana's Divina Devozione Siciliana collection is inspired by centuries of piety. The Sacred Heart necklace, seen here, transforms one of the island's most beloved devotional motifs into an emotional and profoundly personal expression of *alta gioielleria* that represents the convergence of faith, memory and beauty. Crafted in white and pink gold, it features a pendant with pink and rubellite tourmalines and rubies, alongside round and pear-shaped brilliant-cut diamonds. **AM**

Necklace, from a selection, Dolce & Gabbana Divina Devozione Siciliana collection



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Introducing *Shades of Flat and Lustre Finishes* (2026) by Rachel Spelling – a 40 x 66cm artwork for *Harper's Bazaar* that will be revealed over the next three issues and will be available to buy in a limited edition of 300 prints.



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BAZAAR

— a t w o r k —

EDITED BY
MARIE-CLAIRE CHAPPET

Head space

The strategic-communications leader and former Royal Household advisor
Eva Omaghomi on relationship-building, entrepreneurship and the power of storytelling.
Plus: the pivotal role of language degrees in the modern working world

Cotton jacket, £1,490; leather heels, from a selection, both VICTORIA BECKHAM.
Silver earrings, £440, YSSO. Suede bag, £595, STRATHBERRY. Ring, stylist's own



Eva Omaghomi photographed wearing a design by Christie Brown, from Brand63Africa's inaugural cohort of talent

A COURT OF HER OWN

For nearly 20 years, Eva Omaghomi worked at the heart of the Royal Household, helping the monarch-in-the-making command public attention. Now, she tells *Brooke Theis* about expanding her influence beyond the palace walls

IT IS RARE FOR EVA OMAGHOMI TO STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT. Instead, she has built a career advising those who are already there. From royalty and cultural figures to business leaders, her clients look to her for expertise on forging meaningful connections on a global scale.

When we speak, she has just finished working on the second edition of SXSW (South by Southwest) London, where she is chair of the advisory council, assisting with charitable partnerships and increasing the festival's social impact. One keynote speaker was Michelle Obama, who discussed her working life, in which she has 'swerved' between different roles, including lawyer, Flotus and podcaster. 'Having her there was a dream come true,' says Omaghomi, 'and her story was very encouraging to hear for those of us who have pivoted into new areas of life.' Just last year, Omaghomi made a major professional move herself, establishing her communications consultancy Forster

Jones & Associates, named in tribute to her maternal grandfather, while back in February, she launched Brand63Africa, a pioneering UK platform for luxury-fashion brands from Africa and the diaspora.

The decision marked a sidestep away from two decades at the highest levels of public service. After a stint serving in the office of the then Mayor of London Ken Livingstone – during which she worked on the city's successful Olympics bid and helped navigate the aftermath of the 7/7 bombings – Omaghomi joined the Royal Household, where she stayed for 17 years. During her tenure, she orchestrated many significant moments in the future King's public life, including state visits to more than 70 countries, diplomatic engagements with world leaders such as Barack Obama and Xi Jinping, and initiatives aimed at strengthening the monarchy's relationship with diverse audiences across Britain and the Commonwealth. In 2021, she became the first

director of community engagement to the then Prince of Wales, later advising on the King and Queen's coronation in 2023.

Omaghomi's international outlook is integral to her work. She was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and relocated to the UK while in primary school. 'My parents met and went to university here, so the UK has always been a part of my life,' she says. 'Moving here moulded the way that I thought about culture and fitting in. It made me want to study how people mix and interact.' She earned a degree in anthropology at the University of East London, before completing a master's in the anthropology of media at SOAS. It's a passion she shares with the King, who studied archaeology and anthropology at Cambridge – a parallel that was significant to Omaghomi in her role. 'That idea of trying to meet unmet needs and understand how people engage was a great impetus for me to stick around,' she says.

As the global strategic adviser to the King's Trust International (formerly the Prince's Trust), Omaghomi outlined an approach that helped transform the company into a philanthropic force across 25 countries. Under her stewardship, the Trust secured more than £1 million for its African initiatives and partnerships with brands such as CNN and Charlotte Tilbury. She also worked on Windrush 75 and the Palace's inaugural reception to celebrate the British East and South-East Asian communities, both in 2023, as well as *The King's Music Room* in 2025, a radio broadcast in collaboration with Apple Music that presented a playlist of songs from across the Commonwealth chosen by King Charles. 'These were all in keeping with things that the King had done before as Prince of Wales,' Omaghomi notes. 'It was really about articulating that in a particular portfolio.' This shows the power of thoughtful storytelling: shaping how others understand an organisation can be as necessary as the work itself.

For most of us, a senior role at the Palace would represent the pinnacle of a career. For Omaghomi, it has been a springboard to her second act – proof that professional reinvention with your existing skills can be a leap worth taking. 'Relationship-building has been a huge part of the work that I'm doing – and my reputation,' she says. 'People remember the work that you did years ago. There's a saying, "How you do one thing is how you do everything."' As a result, Omaghomi has never had to pitch to a client; each one has approached her directly. This she attributes to 'credibility over time' – a lesson in the importance of playing the long game. 'It is about keeping the stuff that you're told in conversation to yourself.' Idris Elba is now on her roster, and she continues to advise King Charles on community engagement matters (she recently executive-produced a forthcoming Netflix documentary in which the King and Elba, a former beneficiary of the King's Trust, trace its impact over its 50 years).

While the shift from public service to entrepreneurship might appear significant, Omaghomi says the motivation behind her work remains unchanged. 'The idea comes from asking: what is the multigenerational impact that you want to have? What do you want people to say about you when you're no longer here?' The main difference, she says, lies in 'deciding what you will and won't

do; which clients you will and won't take. You want to ensure that you align in your thinking.' So far, she has resisted pressure to scale the business further. 'I want it to stay boutique because the challenge is ensuring that we have the time required for long-term vision-building and multigenerational impact.'

One area in which Omaghomi has sought to make a tangible impact is championing African fashion brands. 'I started wearing more, thanks to people in my community, like Omoyemi Akerele, the founder of Lagos Fashion Week, pointing out designers to me,' she says. Then, a photograph of her attending King Charles' Coronation in a hot-pink look by the Ghanaian label Duaba Serwa went viral. 'People were saying that having something innovative and representative of African fashion in that space was very special,' she remembers.

The moment highlighted the significant potential for African designers within the British fashion industry and their ability to shift perceptions of sartorial luxury. Subsequently, the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance commissioned research into how opportunities for African fashion brands in the UK market could be strengthened. Prompted by their findings, Omaghomi established Brand63Africa – named after the African Union's founding year, 1963 – at London Fashion Week in February this year. Its inaugural cohort comprised five brands: Abiola Olusola, Studio Namnyak, the Cloth, Sukeina (which counts Naomi Campbell and Amal Clooney as fans) and Christie Brown (whose designs have been worn by Beyoncé). 'I'm not an expert in fashion,' Omaghomi says matter-of-factly. 'But I like clothes and what they say about culture – and I'm very good at giving people access.' Indeed, Brand63Africa launched with an exclusive retail partnership with Harrods, meaning the platform's designers will be stocked in-store this autumn. 'Where other people will not ask, I will – and sometimes it's a "yes".'

Many of us miss opportunities through self-censorship, but Omaghomi's success is a testament to the benefits of being bold. It has carried her across institutions and industries, driven by a desire to create chances that might not otherwise present themselves. 'I would like to be defined as someone who gave access when people thought there wasn't any,' she says. 'I want people to say, "She was brave enough to ask, and then to open the door herself."' □

'I like clothes and what they say about culture – and I'm good at giving people access'



REPORT

LOST IN TRANSLATION

Linguists could fill the AI-powered workplace's biggest gaps

BY HELENA LEE

MODERN AND ANCIENT LANGUAGES HAVE HAD AN IMAGE problem for a while. As we experience a technology-led industrial revolution, Stem subjects have remained ever popular. Forty-six per cent of all A-Level exams taken in 2025 were Stem related, while a 2025 report by the Higher Education Policy Institute uncovered a 'catastrophic' decline in language learning: there have been more A-Level entries for physical education than for French, German and the classical languages combined. Cardiff University's modern-languages department has halved in size and, last November, the University of Nottingham put forward proposals to stop offering language degrees, reflecting the perception that job opportunities are dwindling for those without science-based qualifications.

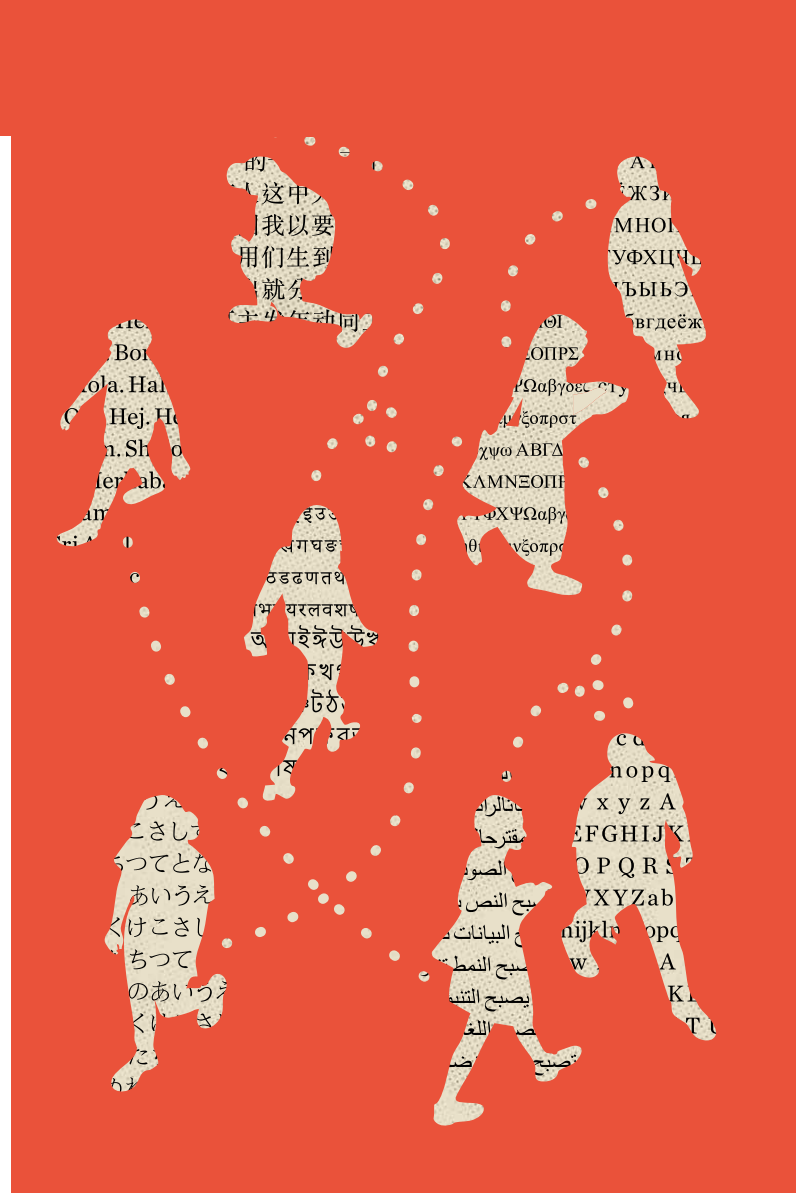
Yet our workforce may be underestimating the skills acquired by those able to master languages. Charlotte Ryland, who founded the Queen's College Translation Exchange (QCTE), based at the University of Oxford, believes that the benefits of a linguistic mindset reach beyond the ability to communicate. She argues that problem solving, empathy, collaboration and resilience – proficiencies developed through language education – are essential to the world of work. 'The law firms and consultancies we talk to are looking for a broad range of skills – but in particular human connection,' Ryland explains. 'It's about how you interpret what people are saying and read between the lines.'

With QCTE, she works at both a grassroots and policy level. For the latter, she supports a cross-government languages group, running projects connecting researchers with policymakers, and is the brain behind the 'Think like a Linguist' campaign. Ryland argues that the risk-taking involved in having to speak a different language, and the confidence gained through doing so, prepares students well for working life.

The BBC broadcaster and journalist Vick Hope agrees. As a teenager, she taught herself Spanish, and went on to read modern languages at the University of Cambridge. For her degree, she spent a year abroad in Buenos Aires. 'I was stepping out of my linguistic comfort zone. It took a while to get to the point where I didn't have to do the translation in my head,' she recalls. 'The experience wasn't just about translating word-for-word, but about interpretation. Interpersonal skills are an important part of a job in any industry.'

AI tools now translate with a higher degree of quality: for instance, some have the ability to do so simultaneously, while others are more sophisticated in going beyond the literal. This poses a further threat to linguists' employment prospects, and to the value society places on language learning.

Ryland thinks that, rather than hiding away from the



advances, linguists are best placed to meet them head on; after all, understanding cultural context and nuance is key. 'Linguists are very careful and critical readers,' she says. 'They will be the ones who can navigate an AI world most effectively, especially as the technology becomes more empathetic.'

The tech-education pioneer Kathryn Parsons, who studied classics at Cambridge University and taught herself Mandarin and Japanese, concurs. 'The ability to "decode" is a unique skill that linguists hone: to think critically about source material, to understand information within different cultural contexts and horizons, and then to bring it alive in a meaningful way – literally, to give information meaning,' she explains. 'How many times have you heard a technical person explain a concept and completely miss what makes the technology meaningful, profoundly understood or merely understood in its simplest terms?'

And this applies not just to live languages, but to the study of culture, history and the language of past societies. 'I think AI poses really big questions for the future of human civilisation, which has depended on human learning,' she says. 'But what does it mean to be human in a world where machines can learn better than us? AI is not just a language and technology but a civilisation issue. That's why Classicists are brilliantly placed to be at the intersection of those worlds; to translate and guide us through this profound moment of change.' So, on your next recruitment drive, don't fall into the trap of overlooking linguists: they may well provide the future-proofing you need. □

HOW I GOT HERE

SULTANA TAFADAR

The King's Counsel barrister shares her path to the top of the legal profession

Since childhood, I wanted to be a lawyer. I watched a lot of legal and political-intrigue dramas, and I always saw law as a tool to bring about fairness and equality.

My first job was working for the National Opinion Poll. It was akin to a call centre – where we'd ring people and ask them for their opinions.

Getting pupillage was my major break. It's the 12 months of training you do to get a certificate to practise as a barrister. There are thousands of applications and only a few hundred spots across the entire profession every year.

It's hard building a practice. I'm an Asian woman and I wear a hijab; I've experienced discrimination as a result, and I still grapple with it all. Once you take silk and you become King's Counsel, that doesn't fizzle out. In some ways, the higher you rise in the profession, the more challenges you face, because there are fewer people like you in that space.

My specialist area is terrorism and national-security work. The first big case I worked on was the 7 July bombings in 2005. I really wanted to cut my teeth and learn how to cross-examine in front of juries. I approached the solicitor for two of the defendants, Imran Khan, and trying my luck, I said: 'I thought you might need a junior to stand in.' I ended up staying for a significant part of the case.

Terrorism cases are interesting from multiple dimensions. We work on the basis that people are innocent until proven guilty. I feel strongly about the right to a fair trial, and believe everybody should have representation irrespective of what they're accused of. The system only works if you have good



prosecutors and good defenders, and you hope justice prevails. **Becoming King's Counsel felt like the work of a lifetime.** I wanted to be among the best, and sometimes you think: 'Will I ever get there?' Then, once you do, you ask yourself: 'Now, what can I do to lift others?' Because I'm in a position where I can bring about real change.

I don't really see failure as failure. I see it as a temporary glitch. If I set myself a particular goal, I don't take 'no' for an answer. There are multiple routes to the summit – you've just got to find the right one.

My leadership style has become more collaborative since taking silk. I like having a diverse team, because people from different backgrounds with their own experiences bring a real depth of perspective. Ultimately, I make a decision on what's the best way forward in a particular situation, but it's good to be well-informed and to see things from various angles.

The advice I'd give my younger self would be to persist. There will undoubtedly be obstacles along the way, but the difference between failure and success is the never-give-up mentality.

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BAZAAR

talking points

EDITED BY
CHARLOTTE BROOK

Colours of magic

Inspired by more than 150 years of *Harper's Bazaar*, the artist Rachel Spelling conjures a dreamlike world in miniature. Plus: the month's most compelling cultural moments all in one place

A R T

THE FINE PRINT

The artist Rachel Spelling transforms *Harper's Bazaar's* rich archive into a bespoke work of art

BY CHARLOTTE BROOK PORTRAIT BY PHILIP SINDEN

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, RACHEL SPELLING HAS GAINED a cult following for her miniature paintings – which is surprising for an artist who previously specialised in mural-making, until the pandemic brought that line of work to a halt. ‘It closed one door but also blasted open a million creative possibilities,’ she recalls. ‘Although I’d been an artist for years, I’d always been looking for my own visual language that was meaningful to me.’ At her kitchen table one day during lockdown, she was perusing a Farrow & Ball paint chart and it occurred to her that the catalogue of rectangular colour swatches, or chips as they’re known, was akin to ‘a collection of tiny walls, already prepped and ready for me to tell stories on’. So, she whipped out her smallest brush and a tube of acrylic, adorned a chip with a koi carp and was off.

‘I saw the chart as my dream job – a house of a hundred differently coloured rooms through which I could move, installing symbolic images from reality or my imagination,’ she says. Spelling, who has collaborated with Kew Gardens and Fortnum & Mason, believes the strength of her works lies in how she unites a mass of motifs, many of which are linked. ‘Each chip is like an individual musical instrument: together, they make an orchestra.’

She has a space at Thames-Side Studios, a sprawling 19th-century former factory in Woolwich. Here, her white walls are lined with paint tins, jars of brushes, a rainbow darts board, postcards and her precious, carefully sourced vintage colour charts, but when I visit, the largest amount of real estate is given over to scans of *Harper's Bazaar* pages from decades past. The artist has spent the last month in our archives for a special collaboration and commission that will see her create an original artwork that riffs on more than 150 years of ideas, imagery and attitude. Three hundred editions will be available from 8 October.

Spelling has found common ground between her own approach and *Bazaar's*, both on a formal level – the beautiful, often witty intersection of words and pictures – and in terms of the wider artistic

practice. She alighted upon Man Ray's work and other surrealist designs in the magazine of the Thirties – René Magritte and his *Treachery of Images* is an important influence on her approach, where she often puts an image onto a chip that has a different connotation from its colour or paint name. For Spelling, this reflects the way we hold multiple, sometimes contradictory ideas in our heads at the same time, but also expresses how magazines and the fashion industry shapeshift and evolve.

We will reveal the work, titled *Shades of Flat and Lustre Finishes* (40cm x 66cm), in thirds over three issues, starting with this one, ahead of it going on sale in October. The 72 chips represent 72 opportunities for Spelling to explore themes that the magazine holds dear and that chime with her. ‘I want to depict the dreamspace of the *Bazaar* woman – the competing and sometimes contrasting thoughts, expectations, hopes, dreams and regrets that hover invisibly around a beautiful shoe, a manicured hand or a yellow hat,’ she says.

If you look closely, you'll start spotting what Spelling calls ‘silent connections’ that she has quietly slipped in between the pictures, in the hope that different viewers will read different conversations. You might see eye contact between two very chic women several columns away from each other; a phone cord snaking ethereally between certain chips; a gloved hand reaching out to its neighbour – all designs prompted by the mid-century era of the magazine's art director Alexey Brodovitch, with whose aesthetic Spelling has fallen in love. Before I leave, I glimpse the Christmas card she's created for *Bazaar* – sumptuously printed and suitably stylish. ‘I want to make it not too “festive” – a bit more glamorous,’ she says.

Spelling is clearly an artist who thrives on variety and plurality: it's what makes her works – which start as a series of mundane objects, a rigid format of gridded oblongs of colour, but end rich in iconography and ideas – so compelling. As she herself puts it: ‘I don't just want to paint one story.’ □



'Shades of Flat and Lustre Finishes' by Rachel Spelling for Harper's Bazaar will be available in a strictly limited run of 300 editions for £300 each from 8 October. The reveal of the next 24 chips will be in the October issue. To sign up for priority access before general release, scan the QR code.

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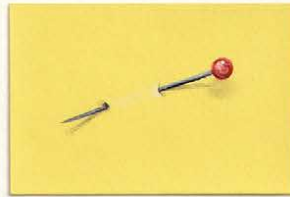
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EAU DE NIL



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STRAW



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FOREST



SHADED GREEN



DARK GOLD



HONEY

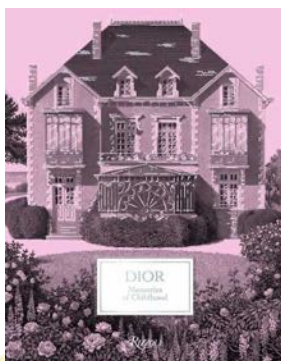
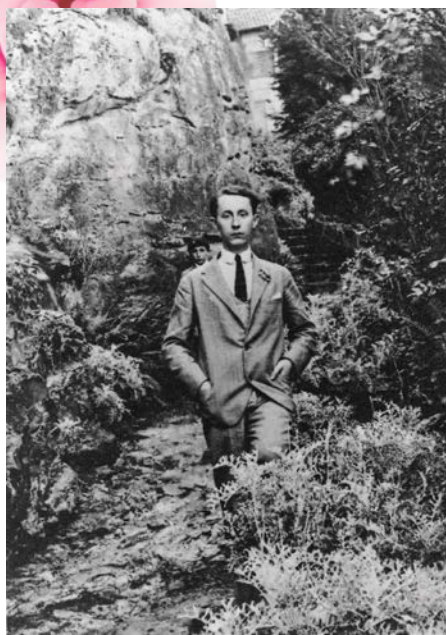


FASHION

ORIGIN STORY

A book exploring Christian Dior's early years sheds light on the couturier's visionary spirit

In the description for his first collection, in 1947, Christian Dior signed off as 'Tian', his nickname as a boy. Now, a new title chronicles those formative years. Few put it better than his childhood friend Suzanne Luling, who went on to become Dior's sales director: 'It all started in Granville: Normandy, the ocean, the characters, the perseverance...' This volume gives a fascinating insight into one of the world's most influential designers. CB *'Dior: Memories of Childhood' by Laurence Benaim (£32.50, Rizzoli) is published on 8 September.*



Top left: the model Anne Sainte-Marie wearing Dior S/S55. Left: Christian Dior in the garden at the Villa Les Rhumbs



FILM

BORN AGAIN

Set your pulse racing with *Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma*, a film that bears all the blood-soaked hallmarks of the quintessential 1980s slasher, while also being an intriguing analysis of the horror genre itself.

Directed by Jane Schoenbrun, the film revolves around Kris, a young queer film-maker (Hannah Einbinder), and Billy, an eccentric ageing actress with whom she has become obsessed, played by Gillian Anderson. Brace yourself – it's in cinemas from 21 August and is positively spine-tingling.

TELEVISION

ALL GROWN UP

Kaya Scodelario on her route from playing a troubled teenager to gangster head honcho

BY FURVAH SHAH

'I'VE NEVER WATCHED IT BACK. I DON'T THINK ANYONE WANTS to see their 14-year-old self on screen,' says Kaya Scodelario of her debut in the cult E4 drama *Skins* in 2007. The actress has certainly come a long way since then, making a powerful impression as the formidable crime boss Susie Glass in Guy Ritchie's acclaimed crime comedy-drama *The Gentlemen*, which returns for a second season this month.

'I felt like I was born to play Susie,' says Scodelario. 'What's wonderful about film and television is you can take human emotions and exaggerate them. I could push the boundaries. It's fun that you never know what her next move will be and who her allegiances lie with.' Indeed, the series sees the character break new ground as her illegal enterprise, which she shares with Theo James' Eddie Halstead, expands from the British countryside to the Italian lakes.

Filming the show was, she explains, almost as unpredictable as its storylines. 'Guy is a unique director – he might decide on the day that he doesn't like a scene and wants to rewrite it. It may not make sense in the moment, but when you watch it back, it's brilliant. As actors, you're conditioned to learn your lines and be prepared, but Theo and I have learnt to embrace change.'



Kaya Scodelario in
'The Gentlemen'

Scodelario grew up in a north-London council flat; as a child, she loved performing, but acting professionally felt out of her reach. An open casting call for *Skins* – the boundary-breaking show that also launched the careers of Dev Patel, Daniel Kaluuya and Nicholas Hoult – changed all that, bringing her into the spotlight in the most democratic of ways. 'That process was the one thing that gave me confidence,' she says. 'The arts should be open to everyone to take part in.'

The production taught her important lessons. 'It's a big adjustment for a young teen to be on set with mostly adults, when you're learning to understand the working environment and how to advocate for yourself,' she says. As a result of her own initial sense of feeling overwhelmed, she's now passionate about helping young colleagues find their feet. 'I'll tell them: "If you're afraid of anything or feel uncomfortable, I'll speak up for you."'

Having built a career defined by variety – from playing Cathy in Andrea Arnold's 2011 film *Wuthering Heights* to starring in Robbie Williams' music video for 'Candy' – Scodelario is keen to keep embracing challenges. 'I never want to feel safe,' she says. 'The excitement is in learning new things and pushing myself.' Season two of *'The Gentlemen'* is streaming on Netflix now. □

BOOKS

MOTHER FIGURE

Romalyn Ante's powerful novel explores the sacrifices we make in the name of family

The former nurse and prize-winning poet Romalyn Ante's debut novel *The Left-Behind Child* draws on her own experiences to offer a compelling portrayal of a long-distance parent-child relationship. Set in 2001, when Neneng's mother moves from the Philippines to the UK to work for the NHS, the 11-year-old is left behind to care for her father, unruly siblings and

various relatives. The novel is a layered interrogation of family and belonging, over the course of which Neneng approaches womanhood solo, discovers her inner reserves of strength and gradually comes to understand why her mother needed to leave in the first place. **KATIE BAXTER** *'The Left-Behind Child' by Romalyn Ante (£16.99, Vintage) is published on 13 August.*



BOOKS

BETWEEN THE LINES

Meg Mason brings her signature warmth and wit to a story set in the literary world

BY ERICA WAGNER

SORROW AND BLISS, THE NEW ZEALANDER MEG MASON'S breakout novel, hit just at the right time when it was released in the summer of 2021. You remember that summer: Covid, lockdown, the world tilted on its axis. The tale of marriage, mental illness and sisterly love set between Oxford and London was her first to be published in the UK, and became a global bestseller.

Mason, who now lives in Sydney, is delighted by its success – but admits she was wary of how it was described, in some quarters, as part of a trend called ‘sad girl lit’. ‘I find it quite pejorative, and I don’t know why women would apply it to their own work,’ she tells me. She won’t go so far as to say it was a mood she was determined to get away from, but I get the sense that it contributed to the creation of the courageous and forthright heroine of her new book *Sophie, Standing There*.

Sophie is a 37-year-old techie at a well-established literary festival in an unnamed city who has struggled through a divorce but keeps on going. It’s her job to mic up the famous authors who take to the stage: she lives for their work, for reading, but she herself is always in the background. After she discovers that a bestselling author called Lilac Dunne – with whom she has developed something of a fascination – will be appearing at her venue, she’s shocked when Dunne seems to initiate what looks like a friendship. Sophie feels a mix of desire and awe as she opens up to her idol and wonders what Dunne might really want from her. It wouldn’t do to give any more away, but ‘never meet your heroes’ offers a hint. Mason explores the trickiness of this relationship with her trademark empathy and humour.

The novel shows two sides of Mason’s own experience. She talks about what it was like to become, quite suddenly, one of those famous authors after the success of *Sorrow and Bliss*

– a ‘mad time’ when she would sometimes find herself at a signing table in front of a reader telling her ‘I love you’. Yet she also recalls and still relates to being a reader on the other side of that table, meeting a writer she felt a connection with.

Mason wants her audience to take courage from Sophie’s tenacity and resilience: it’s her growth and strength that pull the book back from those ‘sad girl’ tropes. ‘I’m trying to express the fact that when we’re lonely, it seems like it’s forever. And the pain is that you’re not only lonely, but you’re ashamed of being that way,’ she says. ‘Loneliness is a season, not a life sentence.’

Dunne is wholly Mason’s creation, but real-life authors – Ann Patchett, George Saunders, David Nicholls – make cameo appearances in the book, which you could call a love letter to the literary life. Sophie’s best friend is called Emma: as it happens, the Jane Austen novel was Mason’s gateway drug into reading, though when I point this out, the author is delighted – insisting it is a coincidence. ‘Choosing names is the most enjoyable form of procrastination, so to keep up the pace, my rule was that what-

ever name I thought of first was the character’s, so long as it was common and plain,’ she says. ‘I’m grateful to my subconscious for throwing up Emma in homage!’ Alongside Austen, she calls Nancy Mitford her literary idol – indeed, the pair share a drollness and a sharp observational eye.

Sophie, Standing There shows the pleasures – and perils – of dreams becoming reality; but also gives us a heroine who discovers she can, and always could, stand on her own two feet, outside the world of her imagination.

‘Sophie, Standing There’ by Meg Mason (£20, Bloomsbury) is published on 27 August. □



Meg Mason

TELEVISION

GET YOUR KICKS

Ted Lasso scores another winning, action-packed season

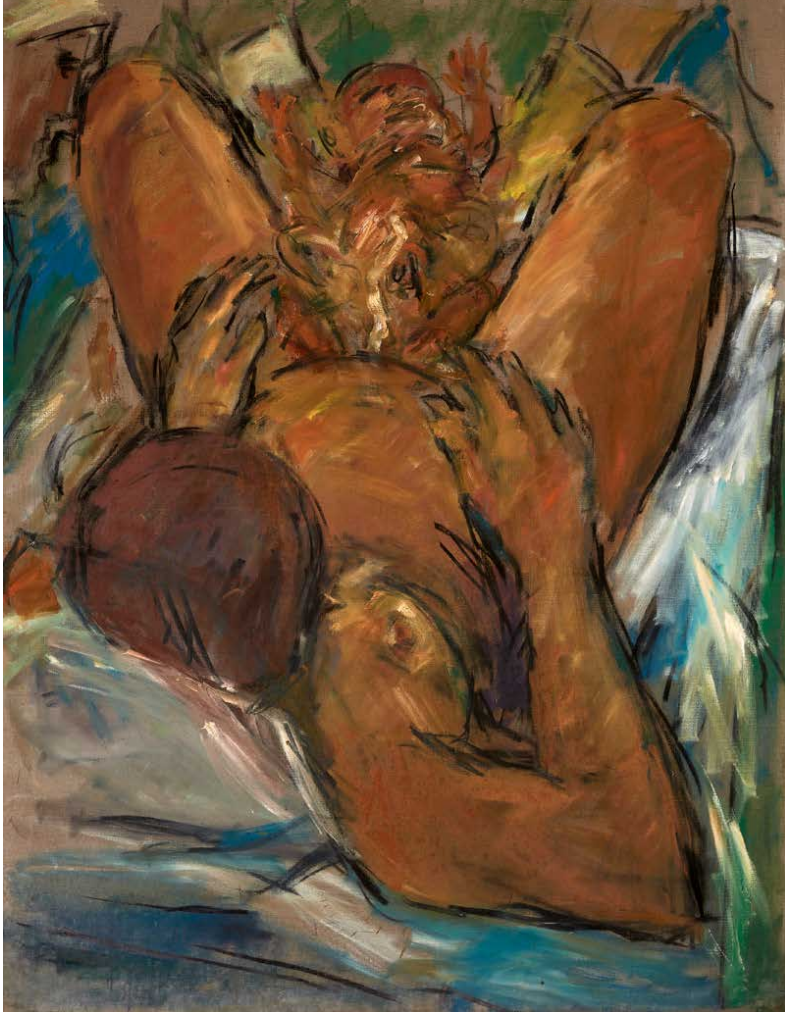
The World Cup may be over, but those in need of a football fix can celebrate the return of the nation’s favourite fictional local team. In season four of *Ted Lasso* (out now on Apple TV), Jason Sudeikis’ relentlessly optimistic American coach takes on a new challenge in the form of

Richmond’s second-division women’s squad. Alongside the familiar faces of Hannah Waddingham and Juno Temple, a fresh cast of characters will kick off the action, including an assistant coach played by *Sex Education*’s Tanya Reynolds.

DANIELLA PARETE CLARKE



Brendan Hunt, Jason Sudeikis and Tanya Reynolds in 'Ted Lasso'



EXHIBITIONS

HANDLED WITH CARE

A tender show pays tribute to the essential work of midwives

For a lot of us, the first person we ever meet in the world is a midwife. Now, the profession is celebrated at Manchester's Whitworth gallery in a carefully curated exhibition drawing on conversations and workshops held with practitioners, some of whom have also contributed art of their own. The infant-feeding specialist Lizzie McLoughlin is one of them; her beautiful piece is shown in dialogue with works by Marina Abramović and LS Lowry. The delicacy and joy of new life are present in all. CB

'The Labour of Care' is at the Whitworth (whitworth.manchester.ac.uk) until 29 August.

Right: 'Oneke's Story – A New Chapter' (2025) by Lizzie McLoughlin.
Top: 'The New Child' (1993) by Ghislaine Howard



TALKING POINTS

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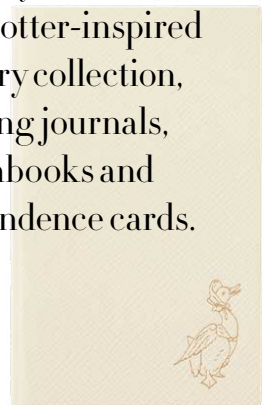


Cards and envelopes, £30 for 10

Peter Rabbit and his cotton-tailed siblings join Jemima Puddle-Duck, Mr Jeremy Fisher and the rest of the gang as the stars of Smythson's new Beatrix Potter-inspired stationery collection, featuring journals, sketchbooks and correspondence cards.



Notebooks, right and below, £80 each





E V E N T

FERTILE GROUND

In the heart of Somerset, the new Big Brue festival offers a landscape as rich in ideas as it is in scenery, bringing together the best and brightest minds in art, culture and beyond

BY CATHERINE FAIRWEATHER

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN MY husband-to-be Don McCullin invited me for the first time to a dinner close to his house near Bruton, I had visions of polite chitchat about the weather and crop rotation around some sherry glasses.

Instead, Brigid Keenan, Don's former colleague from the *Sunday Times* days, a sharp comic author and columnist, hosted a dinner where we were encouraged to talk about our views on Palestine and Israel. The evening was animated to say the least, but we all settled down to disagree agreeably. I think of that dinner as a baptism of fire; and it became the inspiration for Big Brue. That open, civilised spirit of enquiry and debate, the sense of curiosity and optimism, inspired a few of us who live here in Somerset – including Mariella Frostrup and her husband, the human-rights lawyer Jason McCue – to put together a festival that

celebrates different perspectives, debate and discussion. We hope to show that Bruton is a small town with big ideas.

When I married Don in 2002, Bruton was not the artistic hub it is today – you were lucky if you could find anything as exotic as a cappuccino. But in 2014, the visionary gallerists Iwan and Manuela Wirth turned a crumbling 18th-century barn and farm buildings – which had also served as an atmospheric backdrop for Juliette Binoche in the film *Chocolat* – into the HQ of their art and hospitality empire Hauser & Wirth Somerset. Now, it's the perfect spot to hold a week-end of culture and conversation.

At the festival, I will be quizzing the indefatigable Brigid and the restaurateur Prue Leith about hurdles they have overcome, and the immense compensations and inevitable nostalgia of leaving youth behind in their third act. Equally, I can't

wait to hear Dione Roach, an artist and NGO worker, talk about how she and Steve Happi – a former inmate at Douala's New Bell Prison in Cameroon who was later acquitted – set up Jail Time Records, a music studio within its walls. The story of wrongful incarceration and rehabilitation has been turned into a documentary that premiered and won three awards at Tribeca Festival this year. She'll be joined by speakers from the worlds of fashion, film, politics and museums, including Alice Temperley, Joe Wright, Esther Freud, *Bazaar's* Helena Lee and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

Talks are bookended with pilgrimages, tastings of craft drinks and local produce, saunas and workshops, all designed to celebrate this remarkable location and the glue that is community. *Big Brue* (bigbrue.com) is at Hauser & Wirth Somerset from 19 to 20 September. □



From far left: stars from 'Call My Agent!', including Vincent Macaigne, Grégory Montel, Thibault de Montalembert and Laure Calamy. Below: Fanny Sidney and Camille Cottin

F I L M

HAUTE SHOTS

Gallic glamour meets glorious chaos in *Call My Agent!*'s big-screen debut

BY MARIE-CLAIRE CHAPPET

There have been films about films almost as long as there have been films themselves. This month, another joins the ranks: *Call My Agent! The Movie* sees the fabulous French TV series become a feature-length film... about making a feature-length film.

After four hugely popular seasons, the show came to an end in 2020 with the shuttering of the agency and the central coterie of characters going their separate ways. It seemed like the end for Agence Samuel Kerr – but now, its star performer Andréa Martel (played to perfection by Camille Cottin) has made the leap from agent to director. The next chapter of the story will follow her progress as she completes her debut feature.

For the director, Émilie Noblet, this made for a discombobulating experience. 'We had a real film crew shooting a fictional film crew,' she says. 'On the first day, we got a bit muddled between the actors playing crew members and our actual ones. But the funny thing was that the actors spied on them between takes – they soaked up everything we said and did, and used it. It was equally confusing and hilarious.' Cottin, for her part, modelled much of her character's approach to her craft on Noblet's, even quoting her director's notes in certain scenes.



For its writer Fanny Herrero, the funniest moments are deeply rooted in the entertainment industry's inherent absurdities. 'What Andréa experiences is the actual reality of the business,' she explains. 'Actors who let you down two weeks before shooting starts, contract rivalry, exaggerated fees risking a whole project... That's all strictly true to life.' A particularly hilarious sequence sees one of the agency's top casting directors take on a pet as a client.

Animal behaviour aside, the film doesn't shy away from confronting the industry's existential threats – among them the climate emergency's impact on productions. 'It raises the very meta question of whether movies are even viable in today's world,' says Herrero.

For now, however, the film is a celebration of showbiz in all its chaotic glory. Just as the TV series included star cameos from titans of French cinema such as Monica Bellucci and Isabelle Huppert, the film introduces Hollywood talent in the form of George Clooney. Joyously self-referential, laugh-out-loud funny and full of the original's Gallic irreverence, this is exactly the meta-movie the industry needs right now.

'*Call My Agent! The Movie*' is streaming on Netflix from 10 September. □



A R T

THROW SHAPES

Seize September's back-to-school spirit and try your hand at ceramics, through two workshops – one in the town, one in the country – hosted by the master craftswoman Emma Louise Payne. Payne curates classes at County Hall Pottery (countyhallpottery.com) on London's South Bank, and at her own charming teaching studio in a converted barn outside Reading (emmalouisepayne.com).



Above: County Hall Pottery



B O O K S

HOME TRUTHS

For the American writer and humorist *David Sedaris* – whose new collection of essays is another side-splitting triumph – a dog-eat-dog childhood and awkward encounters offer an endless wellspring of comedic material

David Sedaris is the type of writer to whom people feel compelled to tell things. He has written 14 books in which the more absurd aspects of daily life are explored with a dead-pan, cutting humour. His latest essay collection, 'The Land and Its People', explores being a stranger in a strange land (Sedaris lives in West Sussex, England) and his relationship with his husband Hugh and his many siblings. Here, he talks about ageing, the art of comic writing and the pleasures of being part of a big family. KAITLYN GREENIDGE

My sister Amy was on the subway. She was sitting next to a man who was taking up a lot of room. And she was sitting beside a girl who was about 22 years old. Amy was reading, and every time she'd turn the page, she would wind up poking the girl in the ribs. So Amy stopped and put her book away, and then the girl turned to Amy and said, 'Just because you're old doesn't mean you don't have to follow the rules.' For some reason, that made me angrier than if someone had said it to me. There's a moment when you realise that you're old, but there's a whole other moment when you realise that your siblings are. I'm thinking, 'Old? Amy's not old.' And then I thought, 'Well, she's 65. So if you're 22, that's old to you.'

When you get to be a certain age, you can tell what people looked like when they were young. If I look at somebody who's 65, I can see them as 25, and I can see how great they looked. But you can't do that when you're young. You just see someone who's got wrinkles, and they're not even really a person to you. I thought, 'Well, maybe there's a way to turn that diary entry into an essay.'

I think growing up in a big family prepares you for the

cruelty of the world. I mean, that's just part of having a lot of kids around. If you're an only child, chances are the first time you'll be bullied or intimidated is when you go to school, and then you freak out about it. But if you're one of six kids, that's just daily. So many people now, they're an only child, and they're brought up to believe their body is a sacred thing and no one should be able to interfere with it.

I understand it's expensive to have kids. I understand all of that. But when I meet someone and they have just one child, I always feel sorry for that child. Also, I feel sorry because that child's going to grow up knowing that they have to take care of the parent at some point. And that's just a lot of responsibility to be handed. Whereas with six kids, you just think, 'I'm going to move as far away as possible. And when the moment comes to move them into a home, it's going to be your responsibility because you never left the state.'

I grew up a long time ago, so the word toxic didn't exist. No one would ever say, 'Well, my sister is toxic, so I'm no longer going to have any relationship with her.' You didn't have a choice. You didn't cut your parents out of your life. Nobody did that. Since I came from a big family, it left me with a much thicker skin.

That's what I do: I make fun of myself. I'm looking at how petty I am. I'm looking at how boastful I am. I'm looking at how irritating I am. There's a limit – you can only go so far – but I'm looking for an acceptable amount of irritation, I suppose. There's a quote from James Thurber: 'The wit makes fun of other persons; the satirist makes fun of the world; the humorist makes fun of himself, but in so doing, he identifies himself

with people – that is, people everywhere, not for the purpose of taking them apart, but simply revealing their true nature.’

When you admit a flaw, I just think it makes you more like the reader or more like the listener. Everybody can tell when someone’s being phony. Really, nobody’s getting away with it. People maybe won’t point it out to you, but everybody can tell, like virtue signalling. That just reads so clearly as virtue signalling. And to think that you’re getting away with it? I mean, you can surround yourself with other people who do it, but everyone’s still seeing it for what it is. It’s sort of like being caught fake laughing, which I’ve done. I have fake laughed. I’ve been in radio interviews, and sometimes the host will try to be funny. You don’t want to be rude, but anyone listening can read that as a fake laugh. I just feel like I’m not getting away with much.

I’ll be signing a book, and somebody will come up and have a joke for me, and if it’s not told well or if it’s just a tired old joke, like, ‘What’s brown and sticky? A stick,’ that’s an almost-joke. That’s like a kid’s joke. If I had a four-year-old who told that joke, I would just send them to their room, and I would say, ‘You stay in there until you come out with something better than that, because that’s nothing. That is a nothing joke.’ If I just remain stone-faced, people are so embarrassed. So I’m not proud of it. But then I have fake laughed to save someone’s dignity. I think it’s easy to cry, but it’s hard to laugh and sound genuine, even if you are acting in a movie, don’t you think?

When I am reading to an audience, the audience, because the people are in the dark and I can’t see them, is under no pressure to respond. They laugh, they cough. If they cough, they’re basically throwing skulls at me. I can feel them lose interest. I can feel them check out. They’re a wonderful first reader. They really are.

In the car earlier today, I started rewriting what I read last night based on what the audience told me. I didn’t ask anybody about the essay. No one commented on it afterward. I just made notes while I was reading about the things that they laughed at, things that they groaned at. I just learnt a lot of interesting things last night.

The essay was about a guy whom I’d met once who had a micropenis, and I went out of my way to make it not about making fun of the guy’s micropenis. It could happen to anybody.



Above: David Sedaris in 2022. Opposite: the writer and his family in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1980

So when the audience laughed at the micropenis, I thought, ‘I’m not doing my job,’ because I don’t want them to laugh at that. I want them to laugh at my response to it.

When I read it out loud, I didn’t quite realise how complicated it was going to be, but now complications excite me, because I feel like I know there’s a way I can make it work. I know there’s a way, and I’m usually right.

Absurdity is great. That’s what I’m always looking for. The more, the better, as far as I’m concerned. It’s my bread and butter. Did I just say it’s my bread and butter? I’m sorry. I mean, I’m always happy when I see something that’s absurd. My eyes are open for it all the time, and you don’t want to force something. You don’t want to try to convince people that something’s absurd. When it’s absurd and you present it to them, then they recognise it as such. But I’ve been trained because I’ve been at this for so long that I’m just always on the hunt for it.

‘The Land and Its People’ by David Sedaris (Little, Brown Book Group) is out now. □

FILM GIRLS ALOUD

Watch a wellness getaway go haywire



Right: Leslie Mann in ‘Spa Weekend’.
Left: Isla Fisher, Mann and Michelle Buteau in the film



Golf buggies, a headbutting goat and a girls’ trip gone rogue: welcome to *Spa Weekend*, a film from the writers behind *The Hangover*. Isla Fisher’s character has packed a disco ball, spangly tops and several sexual devices that will come to shock her friends of 30 years – and that’s only the start of this rollicking ride. In cinemas from 21 August.

S M E G



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BAZAAR

living

EDITED BY
FRANCES HEDGES

Height of chic

Overlooking lush gardens, Ellie Peugeot's Parisian apartment is an elevated blend of tradition and modernity. Plus: the season's most desirable fashion and interiors collaborations; a new design destination comes to the capital; and the best mid-century-inspired pieces for your home

The dining-room in Ellie Peugeot's Paris home



The bathroom in Ellie Peugeot's apartment, featuring a bathtub from Drummonds, a 1950s vintage chair and wallpaper from Zuber. Opposite, from top: Peugeot with her dog Laïka. The master bedroom, with a chest of drawers by Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, the 'Pigeon' lamp by François-Xavier Lalanne, 'Horn' vessels by Robert Kime and a painting by Gérard Garouste



History in the making

For Ellie Peugeot, a human-rights lawyer turned interior designer, her Parisian apartment is an elegant showcase for an ever-expanding collection of modern and vintage designs

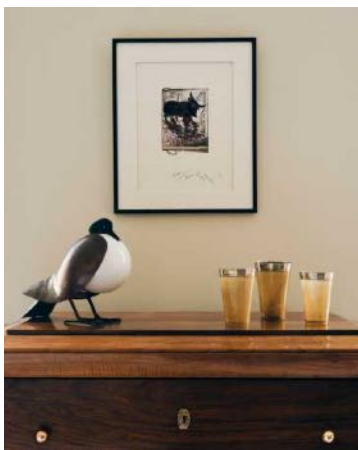
BY FRANCES HEDGES PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUDOVIC BALAY

ELLIE PEUGEOT SAYS THAT HER DREAM HOME FOUND HER, rather than the other way round. ‘We were making a last-minute move to Paris from London and we needed somewhere very quickly,’ she recalls. The property – a third-floor, L-shaped apartment that overlooks the manicured gardens of an 18th-century Rothschild-owned mansion, mere moments from the Elysée Palace – didn’t immediately make sense as a purchase: it was only just big enough for the family of four and it needed significant work to make it habitable (there was no functioning kitchen, for a start). ‘But we’d been living in a garden square on Notting Hill and I wanted something that felt really green – I loved that you could see trees from every window. The first time I visited, I said, “I’m not leaving.”’

There was a secondary motivation for the investment: the apartment, which she and her husband Edouard, a financier and member of the Peugeot dynasty, bought in 2019, proved the perfect testing ground for what was then a fledgling interior-design

career. Born to an English father and an Iranian mother, Peugeot hadn’t expected to pursue a creative profession: she had trained and begun working as a human-rights lawyer – a field she was drawn to because of her background. Her parents had met as students in the US, but split up when Peugeot was only two; faced with punitive divorce laws introduced by the Islamic Revolution, her mother fled Iran with her daughter to seek political asylum in the UK, where she grew up before spending some of her teenage years in Canada.

The law felt like both an appropriate and secure choice, and it wasn’t until Peugeot started taking on interiors for friends that she discovered her true passion. She was fortunate to be able to get her hands on some extraordinary properties – including her mother-in-law’s ‘quite funky’ apartment on Belgravia’s Eaton Square, formerly owned by Isabella Blow – before she and her husband stumbled upon the Parisian residence, which Peugeot was determined to make her own.





The living-room, with a Rose Uniacke sofa, a Jean Royère floor lamp, a coffee table by Christian Liaigre and a vintage art deco side table. Below: the master bedroom, with a desk by Rose Uniacke, a vintage art deco chair and a 16th-century alabaster vase

‘I did everything in three months,’ she says of the renovations, which included stripping out most of what she calls the ‘Napoleonic-style’ excesses: faux marble, gilding, a replica fresco on the ceiling. She restored the original wood panelling by the 19th-century French workshop Féau, re-stained the parquet flooring and laid reclaimed antique limestone in the hallway. Structurally, there was a lot to do as well. ‘We knocked through two rooms to create a proper kitchen,’ explains Peugeot, who chose cabinetry from the British brand Neptune, taps from Waterworks and a classic La Cornue range cooker. She is particularly fond of the stepped-down marble surface she had built into the central island, at which the children – Tristan, nine, and Aria, seven – eat their meals: ‘It doesn’t feel like a kids’ table, but they love having their own space.’

Throughout the apartment, a muted colour palette of white and cream provides a serene backdrop for Peugeot’s extensive collection of artworks – among them a Tracey Emin self-portrait, a study by Tacita Dean and a Lucio Fontana etching – and antiques. Alongside Georgian-inspired designs from Jamb and a Rose Uniacke sofa centre-stage in the living-room, there is a strong showing of 1930s and 1940s furniture, an interest Peugeot developed after designing a booth for a gallery specialising in the era for the Paris PAD art

fair a couple of years ago. ‘I mix a lot of styles, so I’ll buy pieces from the English auction houses – Dreweatts, Woolley & Wallis, Roseberys – but also from Italy and Artcurial in Paris. And, of course, I’ll go to Les Puces most weekends,’ she says. ‘The blend works as long as you give things space to breathe.’

Space will soon no longer come at a premium as, in a remarkable stroke of fortune, the adjacent apartment recently came up for sale – and the couple were quick to snap it up. When we speak, work is underway to connect the two flats (which will together form a 450-square-metre U-shaped property), and Peugeot is excited about the prospect of transforming what began as an impulse purchase into the family’s ‘forever home’. In the plans are a guest suite, a home cinema, a wellness space complete with

sauna and plunge pool (‘I’m designing it with columns in a Greek Revival style – the inspiration is Villa Kérylos in the South of France’) and a gym that she intends to make ‘as aesthetically pleasing as possible’, featuring oak equipment by a German company called Hock. Most thrilling from Peugeot’s perspective is the conversion of the old master bedroom into a grand art deco-esque library with wood panelling recreated from Féau’s archives.

She is noticeably more animated about the heritage aspects of the undertaking



than the more hi-tech investments. 'I just love history,' she says. 'I love the level of detail people took the time to go into, the craftsmanship. Things are so mass-produced these days, whereas my interiors are quite soulful and layered. It works better when the frame is historical because you can do much more storytelling.'

Peugeot's enthusiasm for the architecture of centuries past has been further stimulated by her role as chair of the International Council for the World Monuments Fund (WMF) in France, a charity responsible for safeguarding the future of buildings that include the Palace of Versailles, the Chapel of the Sorbonne and the Church of Saint-Eustache. Since her appointment in 2024, Peugeot has brought a fresh energy to the board, spearheading the organisation of a fundraising dinner in the Potager du Roi at Versailles (see overleaf to read about her friend Zoë de Givenchy's new collection inspired by the event). Her involvement with the WMF continues to shape her work as an interior designer: 'I get so many ideas from visiting incredible spaces – just last week, we went to see Rousham House in the Cotswolds and I fell in love with the William Kent architraves.' She also finds herself with a ready-made network of experts whose talents she can call upon for projects, 'whether that's the best person to re-gild a panel or restore boisserie'.

Those projects this year include a number of major London commissions for her small but growing practice: on the books are Thomas Cubitt's former home on Warwick Square in Pimlico, a townhouse on Kensington's Earls Terrace and a first-floor apartment on the corner of Eaton Square in Belgravia. Meanwhile, visitors to this year's Frieze Masters, on whose council Peugeot now sits, will be able to see her creativity on show in the form of a booth designed for the antiques gallery Charles Ede.

The breadth of Peugeot's visual imagination reflects the diversity of styles she grew up with. 'I have a very blended aesthetic, because I've lived in so many different places,' she reflects. 'I didn't have roots, so I was busy absorbing everything, and I've found a way to mix it all together.' With her own ambitious conversion scheduled for completion this autumn, she will certainly have a large canvas on which to experiment. □



*Peugeot in the living-room.
Above: the Neptune kitchen
with a vintage bar stool from
1stDibs and pendant lights by
Adolf Loos from Woka. Left: the
office, with a bespoke quartz
desk, a 'Plain Clay' lamp by
Maarten Baas and an Eames
chair from Herman Miller*

DESIGN

POWER PAIRINGS

Our pick of the season's most covetable crossovers between the worlds of fashion and interiors

BY FRANCES HEDGES

Below: plate, £187; gloves, £77, both Zoë de Givenchy x Le Potager du Roi. Right: Zoë de Givenchy at home in France



Clockwise from above left: silk scarf, £164; secateurs, £107; glass, £149; basket, £305; apron, £92, all Zoë de Givenchy x Le Potager du Roi



BEST FOR
GREEN GODDESSES

ZOË DE GIVENCHY x LE POTAGER DU ROI

Can you ever look chic while knee-deep in soil and digging up weeds? For Zoë de Givenchy, it's a resounding yes. The California-based Australian homeware designer, who grew up immersed in nature, launched her brand ZdG in 2020, inspired by the commitment to craftsmanship of her uncle-in-law Hubert de Givenchy, founder of the legendary French fashion house. Now, she has joined forces with Le Potager du Roi, the 17th-century garden in Versailles, to unveil a line of products that celebrate her love of horticulture. Raising money for the World Monuments Fund,

which protects heritage sites including Versailles, the verdant collection combines *faïence* (tin-glazed) tableware featuring motifs of espalier fruit-trees with gardening accessories: secateurs, watering cans and even the perfect hat to wear while tending to flowerbeds. 'In the age of Louis XIV, the Potager was really a theatre – the King would come out to see the spectacle of a row of lettuces being hoed,' says de Givenchy. 'I think gardening can be beautiful as well as functional, and I hope people think the same of my new designs.' zdgoofficial.com



Kelly Wearstler for
H&M Home at
Palazzo Acerbi.
Left: tray, £119.99.
Right: jeans, £74.99



BEST FOR CHIC SHOPPERS

KELLY WEARSTLER x H&M HOME

'I dress how I design,' says Kelly Wearstler of the connection between her passion for fashion and her decades-long career as one of the US's top interior designers (her A-list clients have included Cameron Diaz and Gwen Stefani). 'There's always something contemporary and cool mixed with something classic and vintage – I like that tension.' It's fitting, then, that Wearstler is set to launch a dual collection of homeware and ready-to-wear clothing, rooted in the concept of everyday rituals. On the interiors side, modular furniture

– including tessellating tables and accent chairs that can be coupled to form a love-seat – sits alongside sculptural decorative objects such as a dark-wood vase reminiscent of a Roman amphora. Meanwhile, the eight-piece womenswear capsule features a boxy white shirt, voluminous trousers (Wearstler's own signature look) and a cropped leather jacket – designed, much like the homeware, to be adaptable to different settings. As Wearstler puts it: 'It's about creating a world where everything can sit together beautifully.' hm.com



Above: vases
from the new
collection. Left:
table lamp, £149.99



'Blue Moon' rug from
the CF Editions x Erdem
Botanicals collection. Right:
'Pearl Rose' rug from the
Botanicals collection. Left:
'Camomile' made-to-order
rug from the Christopher
Farr x Erdem Flora
collection. Above:
Erdem Moralioglu

BEST FOR
BOTANICAL ARTISTRY

ERDEM x CHRISTOPHER FARR

Nature takes centre-stage in two new rug collections by Erdem for Christopher Farr and its sister brand CF Editions, all hand-knotted in Afghanistan. Choose from the Botanicals suite and the made-to-order Florapieces, available in three colourways: Blue Moon, Pearl Rose and Camomile. 'I've always been drawn to craftsmanship, artistry and storytelling,' says Erdem. 'I wanted these rugs to feel like fragments of a larger narrative. I'm interested in making objects that become part of people's lives, carrying their own stories over time.' The made-to-order Christopher Farr x Erdem Flora collection is from christopherfarr.com. The CF Editions x Erdem Botanicals collection is available at erdem.com.

BEST FOR HERITAGE
AND MODERNITY

OZWALD BOATENG x SAVOIR BEDS

Traditional Ghanaian Kente cloth – a textile made from cotton and silk strips sewn together into a pattern – is the inspiration behind Oswald Boateng's debut design for Savoir Beds, which features woven-leather upholstery teamed with a solid-oak base. 'Kente, which in Ghana is a cloth of royalty, has always been a cornerstone of the creative language of my brand – a direct

connection to my cultural roots,' says Boateng. 'Bringing it into a piece of furniture, something that you live with intimately, felt like a natural progression.' There's a touch of the designer's Savile Row pedigree to be found in the made-to-order piece, too: the back of the headboard is lined with green cotton satin, much like the inside of a sharp suit. savoirbeds.com



Oswald Boateng.
Right: his design for
Savoir Beds



Emilia (left) and Angela
Wickstead. Right: bath
towel, £157; face cloth, £39

BEST FOR
BESPOKE ELEGANCE

EMILIA & ANGELA WICKSTEAD

'I love that something as simple as a beautifully crafted tablecloth can become a family heirloom, passed down through generations,' says Emilia Wickstead of what attracts her to making pieces for the home. Earlier this year, the New Zealand-born fashion designer brought on board her mother Angela – who, until recently, ran her own successful interiors label – to oversee an expansion of her homeware division, adding a line of luxury linens for bed, bath and table to the existing tableware collection. 'My mother taught me so much about garment construction, fit and the importance of craftsmanship – lessons

that have stayed with me throughout my career,' explains Wickstead, who cites 'architectural lines, classical proportions and a sense of old-world elegance' as the core tenets of her design philosophy. For Angela, who has interpreted this through a made-to-order service that incorporates elements such as bespoke embroidery and monogramming, the essence of the brand lies in its artisanal roots. 'Both our wardrobes and our homes are expressions of who we are,' she says, 'and I think there is great value in surrounding ourselves with objects that are considered, enduring and made with care.' emiliawickstead.com

Above: teacup and
saucer, £120; napkins,
£136 for set of four.
Right: plate, £135

FOOD & DRINK

THE FASHIONABLE FOODIE

A trio of stylish gourmet experiences



DINE AT...

BUVETTE, COVENT GARDEN

Jody Williams' New York 'gastrothèque' has arrived in Covent Garden, serving French classics with an edge of West Village chic. buvette-london.com



DRINK...

A DAYCAP

You no longer have to wait until it's 'five o'clock somewhere': afternoon aperitifs are all the rage. Try Pampelle to keep the Mediterranean mood alive even when the holidays are over. £21.20, Ocado



INDULGE IN...

PIERRE MARCOLINI HAUTE COUTURE CHOCOLATES

Running between fashion shows come September? These 'petits bonheurs' (£53) are a perfect – and pretty – pick-me-up. marcolini.co.uk



Katto's knives with fibreglass handles are handmade in Sheffield



Abask is a treasure-trove of colourful glassware



HOMEWARE RAINBOW HIGH

Bring the colours of the catwalk into your home



Fermoie's box-pleat lampshades are available in eight hues



Smeg's iconic 1950s Fab fridges come in both pastels and brights

Steak knives, £85 for a set of four, Katto. Glassware, from a selection, Abask. Fridges, from £1,399, Smeg. Lampshades, from £275, Fermoie



Pendant light by Fortuny for RH Estates, £10,210

RH London, the Gallery in Mayfair

CULT SHOP

CAPITAL GAINS

RH brings its brand of sleek American style to London with a new Mayfair flagship

a gold-leaf ceiling within the historic banking hall, go for a drink in the marble-clad wine bar or relax in the Tea Salon.

The most coveted seats in the house, however, are on the rooftop terrace, where Anouska Hempel – the pioneering designer behind boutique hotels including Blakes in South Kensington – has created a whimsical outdoor-dining area known as the Perch. Her inspiration, she says, came from visiting Aynho Park last year, where she found ‘echoes of European grand houses, English gardens, monastic calm and the romance of travel’. In Mayfair, she describes her design as having ‘an intimacy, an elegance and a quiet theatricality’: visitors can order from a bar beneath a smoked-glass canopy and sip cocktails while seated inside grand glass birdcages.

Friedman says that RH’s arrival in London signifies his plans to ‘plant real roots and be a permanent part of the community’. So, even if your living-room can’t accommodate one of the brand’s best-selling deep-seat sofas, chances are you’ll soon understand the story it has to tell. *FH RH London, the Gallery in Mayfair (rh.com).*

‘BUILT ON A FOUNDATION OF RARITY, AND a reverence for what came before.’ This is how Gary Friedman, chief executive of RH (formerly Restoration Hardware), describes the California-based furniture brand’s first outpost in the British capital, located in one of the city’s few surviving Palladian mansions, opposite the Royal Academy of Arts. Redesigned by Foster + Partners to encompass two adjoining Grade II-listed properties, RH London, the Gallery in Mayfair, is a five-storey wonderland for design aficionados, housing the company’s signature linen-upholstered sofas, lighting and outdoor-living collection, as well as the new RH Estates line. For Friedman, the architectural framework and the furniture are seamlessly connected: ‘The buildings have a rich history and presented a challenging yet beautiful canvas to write its next chapter and ours.’

Along with its almost 100 stores across the US, Canada and Europe (including in Paris, on the Champs-Élysées, and on Corso Venezia in Milan), the brand has an existing British presence in the form of RH England at Aynho Park, the landmark John Soane-designed estate. The Gallery in Mayfair – which opened to much fanfare in June, with Margot Robbie, Henry Cavill, Hayley Atwell and Janet Jackson among the guests in attendance – cements the importance of the UK market in RH’s expansion plans. It has been conceived not only as a space for shopping, but also as a lifestyle destination: convene over caviar in the Dining Room, set beneath



Floor lamp by Anouska Hempel for RH Estates, £1,390

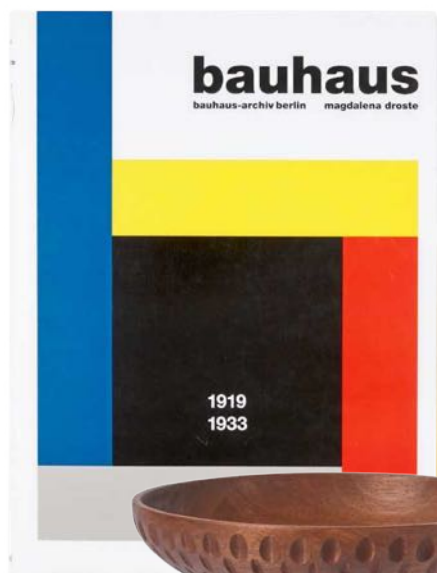


Sofa by Michael Taylor for RH Estates, from £9,340



Cast-metal sculpture, £495

Side table, £1,290



Bauhaus book,
£60, Taschen

Candle, £89,
Diptyque



Vase, £725,
Akua Objects



Salad bowl, £82,
Serax at Selfridges



Chair, £6,550,
Louis Vuitton



Bowl, £245,
Zanat



Coffee
maker,
£95, Alessi



Candles,
£350 for two,
Brunello Cucinelli

INTERIORS MODERN LOVE

Fall for sleek designs that bring
mid-century style to your home

COMPILED BY GRACE CLARKE

Table, £435,
101 Copenhagen at Mytheresa



Cutlery, £200
for a 24-piece
set, Sabre



Coffee machine,
from £999.95, Smeg

Table lamp,
£34.99,
H&M Home

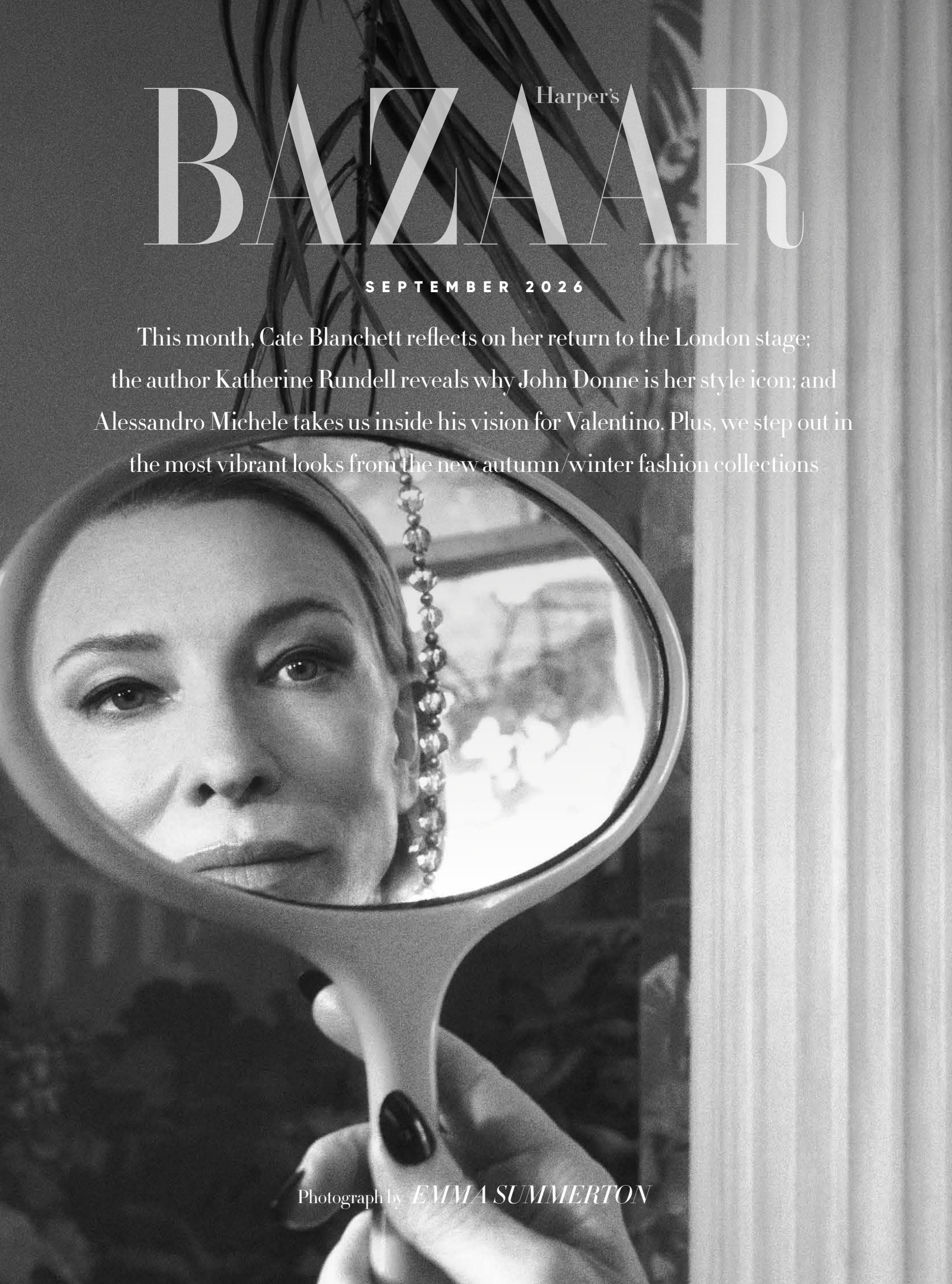


Stool, £465,
Hay

Glasses, £160
for four,
Les-Ottomans



BAZAAR



Harper's

SEPTEMBER 2026

This month, Cate Blanchett reflects on her return to the London stage; the author Katherine Rundell reveals why John Donne is her style icon; and Alessandro Michele takes us inside his vision for Valentino. Plus, we step out in the most vibrant looks from the new autumn/winter fashion collections

Photograph by *EMMA SUMMERTON*



Cate Blanchett wears
mesh dress, from
a selection, JEAN PAUL
GAULTIER. Acrylic
headpiece, £1,200,
STEPHEN JONES
MILLINERY



Cate Blanchett wears silk dress, about £3,900, MATIÈRES FÉCALES. Leather boots, £1,615, CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

Photographs by *EMMA SUMMERTON* Styled by *CHARLES VARENNE*

WOMAN of PARTS

Cate Blanchett returns to the stage for a challenging dual-role performance – but the actress is no stranger to leading multiple lives. Taking a rare break, she sits down with *Sasha Slater* at the National Theatre to discuss family, fashion and why women should be running the world



Knit dress, about £8,550;
viscose tights, about £835,
both LOEWE. Leather
heels, £820, CHRISTIAN
LOUBOUTIN. White and
yellow gold and diamond
necklace (above right, in
foreground), from
a selection, LOUIS
VUITTON HIGH JEWELLERY





Leather and knit gilet, from
a selection; knit gilet,
£3,750; matching vest,
£1,140, all LOUIS VUITTON

EMMA SUMMERTON

C

ate Blanchett is sitting tucked behind a pillar in the National Theatre's Lasdun restaurant on London's Southbank. She's dressed to match the brutalist building's brown carpets, in a chocolate-coloured top and chestnut corduroys, and sipping a non-alcoholic negroni. But of course, she doesn't blend in at all. Instead, her pale, sculpted face glows with energy, her words tumble over each other and ideas zing about in a joyous whirl, from solving the climate crisis to how to keep Doug, her pug, fit. 'I'm sorry, I'm all over the place. My brain is a bit scrambled,' she says.

This is the evening of day two of rehearsals for Blanchett's new play *Electra/Persona*, and she's been working with 'a room full of beloved colleagues' including Benedict Andrews, who, in 2009, directed her in an eight-hour Shakespeare marathon at the Sydney Theatre Company. She will be co-starring with Nina Hoss, the German actress who played Blanchett's wife in the multi-Oscar-nominated 2022 film *Tår*, telling the story of a conductor caught up in MeToo scandals (more on that later). This new three-hander, also starring the Irish actress Ella Lily Hyland, will blend Sophocles' *Electra*, about Agamemnon and Clytemnestra's vengeful daughter, with Ingmar Bergman's dreamlike 1966 psychological drama *Persona*, in which a famous actress, played in the film by Liv Ullmann, has retreated into silence and is cared for by a young nurse (Bibi Andersson) who becomes increasingly unable to separate herself from her patient. The *Tår* composer Hildur Guðnadóttir is doing the music, and Blanchett herself is on the board of trustees of the National, which is one of her two favourite buildings in London (the other is the Barbican). No wonder she feels this is a 'homecoming', though not a relaxing one. 'I always love rehearsal rooms,' she says, 'because they can be so robust. And sometimes, with friendships, there's a sense that you're cosy with each other. But what I love about artistic friendships is that they really challenge you.'

This is Andrews' fourth play with Blanchett and he says that being in a rehearsal room with her is like being with Kylian Mbappé or Usain Bolt at the height of their powers. 'There's a joy and exhilaration to it,' he says. 'She could be monstrous and wrapped up in herself, but she turns the energy outwards and it's amazing.' She's a risk-taker and so is he. He feels that he, Blanchett and Hoss are 'leaping off a cliff together'.

This play will be even more demanding to perform because Blanchett and Hoss will swap parts each night. 'I've never done

that before,' says Blanchett. 'I always feel engaged and responsible for the whole, not just the character I'm playing. I guess this is a wild extension of that. We might find ourselves on the floor playing one role and the other person might make a suggestion, and then you continue the rehearsal with the other person playing that part.'

At 57, Blanchett has, in her own life, played a dizzying number of different characters. There's her commitment to the stage as the former co-CEO and co-artistic director of the Sydney Theatre Company, as well as her starring roles in well-received productions of Chekhov and Tennessee Williams, among others. In film, she has had Oscar-winning turns in *Blue Jasmine* and *The Aviator*. In blockbuster mode, she has graced Middle-earth as Galadriel, the Elf queen in *The Lord of the Rings*, tried to kill Indiana Jones as the KGB agent Irina Spalko and was the first major female villain in the Marvel universe, pitted – ultimately unsuccessfully – against Chris Hemsworth's Thor. And that's not even the half of it.

Her acting has to work around her activism. With other arts luminaries, including Steven Soderbergh, she has started a technology not-for-profit organisation, RSL Media, which stands for Really Simple Licensing. It will be a register where people can log whether they are comfortable having their creative work and image scraped by AI companies for machine learning. 'When this technology started to blow up, a lot of the people who were at the cutting edge were going to governments and saying, "We've done this; how are we going to use it? What are the risks?" [Everything's] so polarised no one feels they can get round the same table to discuss the challenges, and the central one is consent.' She's not a hair-shirted Luddite, though, and thinks there are 'a lot of pluses' to AI if only we answer the question: 'How is it helping?' It's free to register and, she adds self-deprecatingly, 'so simple, even I can understand it, and that's saying something'.

She's also a committed environmentalist. At the Sydney Theatre Company, she and her husband, the playwright Andrew Upton, pioneered green energy by taking the company off-grid – which, she says with understandable pride, made it 'the largest [carbon-neutral] organisation in the southern hemisphere' at the time. She now sits on the Earthshot Prize Council, looking for technological solutions to climate change, along with David Attenborough and the Prince of Wales. So, does she hang out with Prince William? 'Oh yes, all the time.' She laughs. 'He's got so much time on his hands, that man.' More seriously, she says he has been an 'extraordinary leader, very hands-on in a consistent and practically engaged way'. She thinks it's down to his upbringing and his father: 'He has inherited that interest. He's grown up with it.' Her own awareness of environmental damage is thanks to her childhood in Melbourne, Australia. 'I grew up with a Depression-era



Faux-fur coats, £6,900
each, both EMPORIO
ARMANI. Sunglasses, £990,
JACQUES MARIE MAGE.
Tights, stylist's own

EMMA SUMMERTON





Lace and satin dress,
£3,600, STELLA
McARTNEY. Sunglasses,
£760, JACQUES MARIE
MAGE. Suede heels, £825,
GIANVITO ROSSI



Twill dress, about £1,940,
SIMONE ROCHA.
Sunglasses, £760,
JACQUES MARIE MAGE



Mesh dress, from a selection, JEAN PAUL GAULTIER. Acrylic headpiece, £1,200, STEPHEN JONES MILLINERY

IT'S IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT MISSTEPS. IF YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THINGS, YOU WON'T DO THEM AGAIN

grandmother and, to her, waste was anathema. I think that's at the base of it. I turn the light switches off.' She hates the giant portions in American restaurants: 'Why would you use that much if you don't want that much? My relationship to the world has never been a land grab.' Where others (she means Silicon Valley's tech giants) have prioritised money 'above anything else as a measure of success, a measure of value', success for her is 'moments of flow, when all your neurons are firing'.

She has been actively 'greening' at home in East Sussex: 'I walk the talk as much as I can.' When I ask if she has an electric car, she counters: 'We've got a horse. I'm prepared.' For the past two days, she has brought in a packed lunch of 'my own broccoli, my own courgettes, my own onions. I was so excited!' But tonight, along with our 'nogronis', she orders anchovies and potatoes because 'someone else ordered it last night and they won'. She teams it with oysters 'for the zinc', topped with Tabasco, which she enjoys partly because her advertising-executive father, who died when she was 10 years old, did the campaign that brought Tabasco to Australia, 'so I grew up with a back cupboard that had 1,000 bottles in it'. Her three sons, who are variously at work in the London film industry, studying at New York University and just finished with A-levels, are 'obsessed with the Fermentalist's', an Australian hot-sauce brand.

Home with Upton, to whom she has been married since 1997, and her 11-year-old daughter Edith, and her sons coming and going, sounds as fun as it is chaotic. As well as her daughter's pony and the pug, there's a vizsla-springer-spaniel cross: 'My daughter got to name her, and she said "Penis!", and when we asked if she had any other ideas, she said "Politics!" – two much-discussed subjects in our house, obviously. So, the dog is called Polly.' Added to the menagerie is a chameleon called Hamlet and a flock of chickens. Blanchett's mother June, now aged 87 'and still driving', also lives with them. 'Our house is so noisy and I wouldn't give that up for the world,' she says with a smile, citing the psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott's theory that 'you don't want parents who are anything better than good enough'. 'I don't know whether we're doing anything right, but I can maybe reach that.'

Blanchett gets up at five every morning to feed the chickens, make her daily plunge into cold water, walk the dogs and do the school run. 'I suppose it's years and years in the film industry, which is all early starts,' she muses. 'But I'm also a creature of the theatre, so I love late evenings – the moment when everyone else goes to bed and I've got the house to myself.' It doesn't leave much time for sleep, I point out. 'Yes, I had a hard word with myself about a year ago and said, "You really need more than four hours."' With everything else going on in Blanchett's life, it sounds exhausting. 'The wheels are constantly falling off,' she agrees. 'Constantly.'

The family moved to England 'just in time for Brexit'. She thinks it's strange that no one who was responsible for the UK leaving the EU wants to admit they got it wrong. 'It's really important to talk about missteps, mistakes... shame is such an important part of things. If you take responsibility for things, you won't do

them again.' This takes her back to Greek tragedy and how 'the stories the Greeks told and retold were about the cyclical nature of violence and the way what seems like a personal action, a moment of vengeance, has ripple effects for whole families and future generations'. She thinks we are 'in a moment of wilful ignoring of the lessons of history'. No wonder her new play feels timely.

One of those ignored lessons is on the MeToo movement, which, she has said in the past, 'got killed very quickly'. 'We were at an exciting point,' she adds now. 'But we've never reached equality of pay, and not only has MeToo been rolled back, and super-quickly discredited, but there's a conversation in one of the biggest democracies in the world [the US] about women not having the right to vote because of household voting.' She thinks it's a shame that women aren't running the world: 'Not that we're perfect... But we're pretty bloody close. It certainly isn't working at the moment.'

She's alert to the pressures of cosmetic surgery, GLP-1s and the vortex of toxic influences on her young daughter. Her own face, intensely mobile, looks untouched by knife or needle, and she says that when she sees a 'fresh face, a quote-unquote imperfect face, I marvel at its beauty'. Blanchett is aware that Edith is 'on the cusp of all that stuff, but you have to keep the door to conversation open. They'll sense if you're coming to control or curate their relationship to their friends or the digital world'. So, instead of hard screen-time limits, she asks, 'Why do you need it? What are you doing that you can't do with a pen and paper?' She tries to 'have respectful arguments with my kids and explain my point of view'.

Motherhood, like her other roles, is a collaborative one. She's a team player, which is why she loves the theatre for the way it gathers people together in one space for a shared experience. It's at this moment that Bina Daigeler, a costume designer Blanchett worked with to create Lydia Tàr's chic, androgynous wardrobe, joins the table and our talk turns to fashion, with Daigeler saying 'she's not at all difficult but she's super interested' in the process of creating a costume for her characters. Blanchett, a multiple winner of best-dressed awards, adds that, for her, 'fashion is a performance art, with an emphasis more on performance than art'. An ambassador for Louis Vuitton womenswear, she finds it fascinating how 'the ideas from runway shows get distilled and disseminated' out onto the street. As in every other area of her life, Blanchett brings her prodigious élan, intelligence and style to the question of clothes, as well as her loathing of waste. Her rule is that if she hasn't worn something for four seasons, she'll give or lend it to a friend; at some point, it may come back to her, or it may not. The habit is a characteristic blend of generosity, thoughtfulness and frugality.

At this point, I get up to leave and make to pay the bill. But the staff at Lasdun wave away my offer. Our oysters and mocktails are on the house. Of course they are. Cate Blanchett may want to be just one of the gang – everyone else knows she's the star of the show. *'Electra/Persona' is at the Lyttelton Theatre, National Theatre (nationaltheatre.org.uk), from 19 August until 10 October.* □



Wool jacket; matching skirt, both from a selection; JACQUEMUS. White and yellow gold and diamond necklace, from a selection, LOUIS VUITTON HIGH JEWELLERY. Leather heels, £1,060, LOUIS VUITTON

EMMA SUMMERTON





Leather-embellished
dress, from a selection,
LOUIS VUITTON





Viscose-mix coat, from a selection, ACNE STUDIOS.
Acrylic visor, £435, HOUSE OF FLORA. Hair by Sam McKnight, using Hair by Sam McKnight. Hair assistant: Valerie Benavides. Make-up by Val Garland at Streeters. Make-up assistant: Paula Maxwell. Manicure by Abena Robinson at Agency 41. Set Design by Trish Stephenson at Patricia McMahon. Production by Shiny Projects. Stylist's assistant: Olivia Sandford-Wilson



Photographs by
ERIK
MADIGAN
HECK
Styled by
MIRANDA
ALMOND

GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON From left; Luoyi wears alpaca wool coat, £4,224; silk satin T-shirt
(worn as hat), £4,224; leather gloves, £2,155. Athena wears silk capé; matching dress; brass earring, all from a selection; leather boots, £2,322

A woman with long dark hair and large gold earrings stands in a field of tall grass next to a body of water. She is wearing a bright yellow dress with intricate floral embroidery and a long, flowing green cape. The background features a line of trees with autumn foliage and a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall mood is vibrant and romantic.

WILD AND FREE

The autumn/winter collections beckon you to be bold, inviting a more instinctive approach to dressing. Channel the dynamic mood of the new season in dramatic capes, buttery leathers, romantic lace and fluid silks for happy-go-lucky living

LOUIS VUITTON Wool cape, from a selection; matching vest, £1,400; matching trousers, £3,200



ERIK MADIGAN BECK

A full-body fashion photograph of a model with long, straight blonde hair and bangs. She is wearing a Chanel-style gold tweed suit, consisting of a jacket and a matching skirt. The jacket is open, revealing a light-colored shirt underneath. The skirt is knee-length and flared. She is also wearing black slingback heels with white tips. The background is a studio setting with a grey, textured wall and wooden framing. The floor is a greenish-grey material.

CHANEL

Tweed jacket,
£8,615; matching
skirt, £4,005; twill
shirt, £3,915; suede
and lamb-skin
slingbacks, £1,090



A woman with dark hair and light blue eye makeup is lying on her side on a grey, draped fabric surface. She is wearing a grey, long-sleeved jumpsuit with a high collar and a zipper down the front. Her legs are bent, and she is wearing red, knee-high boots with silver buckles. The background is a dark, textured wall with wooden trim.

HERMÈS From left: Ava wears cashmere and silk jumper; wool and silk top (worn underneath); lamb-skin mini-skirt; silk tie, all from a selection. Athena wears wool and lamb-skin dress, from a selection; rose gold and diamond earrings, £8,180; calf-skin boots, from a selection

ERMANNO SCERVINO

Tulle and lace dress, £6,680; glitter clogs, £780



ERIK MADIGAN HECK



BALENCIAGA Leather bomber jacket; viscose trousers, both from a selection





McQUEEN

From left: Luoyi wears silk georgette dress, £8,800; satin sandals, £1,100. Ava wears leather trench-coat, £6,700; silk dress, £5,300; embroidered mask, £5,300; leather boots, £1,350. Londone wears silk and lace dress, from a selection; silk capri pants, £650; leather boots, £1,350. Athena wears lace and organza dress, £4,100; leather heels, £890



BURBERRY Shearling coat, from a selection; leather trousers, £3,490; matching belt, £345

ERIK MADIGAN HECK

CELINE

From left: Ava wears wool crepe dress, £3,250; leather mules, £730. Tights, stylist's own. Luoyi wears viscose satin top, £1,700; matching trousers, £1,350; leather flats, £690



MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION Wool and viscose blazer, £1,870; cashmere jumper, £742; cotton jumper, £370; viscose jumper, £292; viscose and wool skirt, £1,270; leather Oxford shoes, £520





ERIK MADIGAN HECK

RALPH LAUREN COLLECTION

From left: Ava wears cotton and leather trench coat, £4,750; cashmere jumper, £900; silk skirt, £2,600.
Luoyi wears cotton shirt, £1,250; wool-blend trousers, £950; leather belt, £620; leather mules, £1,150



ERIK MADIGAN HECK



TOD'S Leather cape; silk jumper, both from a selection



DOLCE & GABBANA From left: Luoyi wears wool cape, £9,050; silk chiffon dress, £3,750. Ava wears shearing coat, from a selection; silk chiffon dress, £3,750; matching scarf, £335. Londone wears cotton cardigan, £7,600; matching skirt, £6,650; lace romper (worn underneath), £1,600; satin briefs, £250. Athena wears cotton shirt, £1,200; lace skirt, £3,600; satin briefs, £250.





PRADA

From left: Ava wears satin dress, £4,100; poplin top, £730; cotton socks, £860; satin heels, £1,400. Londone wears nylon jacket, £5,200; wool jumper, £1,910; cotton skirt, £1,010; matching trousers (worn underneath), £1,010; cotton socks, £860; calf-skin heels, £1,130.

ERIK MADIGAN HECK

GIORGIO ARMANI Jacquard dress, from a selection; matching trousers, £12,000; velvet boots, £1,450





MAX MARA From left: Londone wears mohair and wool dress, from a selection; nappa suede gloves, £540. Athena wears silk satin dress, £1,770. Gloves, stylist's own





FERRAGAMO Silk organza shirt, £1,310; matching skirt, £1,085

D I O R Silk organza jacket; sequin-embroidered mini-skirt, both from a selection; polka-dot heels, £900





MIU MIU

From left: Ava wears wool dress, £2,950; polyamide trousers, £1,330; polyamide and shearling hat, £780. London wears silk dress, £2,750; tulle dress, £2,650; washed-silk dress, £1,560. Athena wears wool dress, £2,950; matching trousers, £2,100. Luoyi wears wool jacket, £3,850; matching trousers, £2,100; washed-silk dress (just seen), £1,560



GUCCI From left: Luoyi wears silk jacket, £2,210; matching skirt, £1,060; crepe de chine shirt, £1,060.
Tights, stylist's own. Athena wears silk top, £1,150; jersey leggings, £975







VALENTINO

From left: Luoyi wears georgette top; satin skirt; pearl and crystal earrings; Lycra tights, all from a selection. Suede sandals, from a selection, VALENTINO GARAVANI. Londone wears satin cape; satin skirt; pearl and crystal earrings, all from a selection. Suede, goat-skin and leather heels, from a selection, VALENTINO GARAVANI.

CHLOÉ Silk dress, £6,556; matching skirt, £8,259; calf-skin boots, £2,120



F E N D I From left: Athena wears velvet dress, £3,700; leather collar, £630; cotton socks, £170. Ava wears cotton dress, £4,900; leather collar, £630; silk shorts (worn under dress), £810; cotton socks, £170. Luoyi wears wool dress, £2,350; leather collar, £630; shearling scarf (in hand), £4,900; cotton socks, £170; leather heels, £870. Londone wears silk dress, £4,050; leather collar, £630; silk bra, £810; matching shorts, £810; cotton socks, £170

ERIK MADIGAN HECK



Hair by Declan Sheils at
Premier Hair & Make-up,
using Hair by Sam
McKnight. Make-up
by Andrew Gallimore.
Senior stylist's assistant:
Hadya Tuofiq. Stylist's
assistants: Gloria
Madenge and Lauryn
Doherty. Models: Londone
Myers at Next; and Athena
Wilson, Ava Good and
Luo Yi at Premier Model
Management. Hair
assistant: Fabio Carniero.
Make-up assistant:
Nic Marilyn at Vision
Curate. Set design by
Charlotte Lawton at
Patricia MacMahon.
Location production: Lucy
Watson Productions

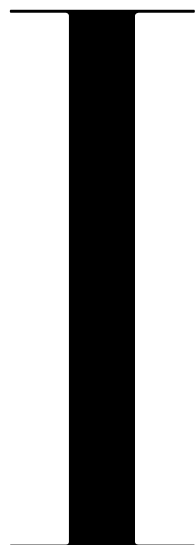




FASHION PHOTOGRAPHS BY AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA

DIVINE TIMING

Alexander Fury enjoys
an audience with
Valentino's creative director
Alessandro Michele,
whose bold, disruptive
approach – one that blends
beauty with chaos, and
tradition with innovation – is
adding an unexpected
chapter to the iconic Roman
house's mythology



In a grand office, in the grand Palazzo Mignanelli that serves as the imposing headquarters to the grand house of Valentino in Rome, its creative director Alessandro Michele looks oddly at home. It's odd because that grand office, a former ballroom on the palazzo's *piano nobile*, proportioned accordingly and with an intricate vaulted-wood ceiling, looks like nothing less than some Vatican offshoot, a set primed and ready for *Conclave* to film a few extra scenes. The vast room was specifically chosen for the late, great Valentino Garavani – known universally, respectfully, as Mr Valentino. He wasn't a pope of fashion but, in the words of *Women's Wear Daily*, the 'Sheikh of Chic', and this room was intended as a suitably impressive 'frame', according to his business partner Giancarlo Giammetti. During the palazzo's renovation by Tommaso Ziffer and Massimo Zompa in the 1980s, Giammetti declared: 'One has to *know* one has arrived in Valentino's study.' Oh, you still know it today.

You do, however, also know that Michele isn't Valentino. The two don't look – nor indeed design – alike. Actually, they couldn't be more different. With his beard and flowing Twelve Disciples hair, 53-year-old Michele – the former creative director of Gucci, now two years into his new role – more readily resembles the beatific Renaissance saints whose likeness once hung on his studio's soaring walls than the dapper, suited-and-booted Valentino-male archetype. Today, he's seated before an oil painting of an Elysian scene that almost looks like a theatrical backdrop, and is wearing a white T-shirt printed with the slogans APOLLON and DYONISOS in that bright, signature shade of scarlet known throughout the world as Valentino red.

Those two gods – Greek, incidentally, rather than Roman – represent opposite poles: harmony and divine order versus passion, emotion and instinct. Valentino definitely belongs to the former camp; Michele is more 50/50. He's kind of the fashion god of chaos, honestly – he has sent models trailing pellucid satins in the gutters of Hollywood Boulevard, out onto an operating-theatre catwalk carrying facsimiles of their own heads and, for his debut Valentino haute couture show, wearing ballgowns of breathtaking beauty and Luchino Viscontian proportions juxtaposed with *lucha libre*-inspired masks. He has already staged a Valentino presentation in a sweaty reproduction of a public bathroom, which raised many eyebrows and some hackles.

The opposing poles at play in his reimagined Valentino were amply demonstrated by a spectacular autumn/winter 2026 ready-to-wear show. It was held in the rather more refined environs of the Palazzo Barberini in Rome, the first in his own and the brand's hometown. Rome is, for Michele, an essential component that shapes his approach to fashion, and that of Mr Valentino, too.

But their perspectives of the city are divergent. 'Rome, it's about very different kinds of beauties,' he says. 'There is one that is solemn; it's incredible; it's big. The beauty of the Greek and Latin language of the goddesses and gods, the majesty of the marble of the *fontana*.' He allies those goddesses with Valentino's idealised women, perfectly draped in stylised plissé silk. 'But, on the other side, there is the mess of all these layers, different kinds of messages and emotions.' Indeed, traipsing through Rome to the Piazza di Spagna, overlooked by Valentino's palazzo, is to time-travel with mind-boggling speed through architecture that runs the gamut from the ancient world to the Renaissance, the Baroque period to the 1900s bourgeoisie and 1930s rationalism, all at once. 'It's like you are in front of the most colossal movie from Hollywood – with the biggest budget for the biggest ceiling, the biggest room, the biggest window, the biggest palace.' He's laughing. 'And also the biggest mess.' You can see that mix in his Valentino clothes – if there's one thing Michele is bringing to Valentino's impeccable *Roma*, it's a welcome bit of messiness.

That is perhaps why Michele called this collection *Interferenze*. Indeed, the parade of post-modern beauty, comprising unanticipated combinations of full-length fur coats, leggings and exquisite lace and chiffon gowns worn with globules of gems, felt like just that, as they passed through frescoed salons that, Michele says, seem larger than a football field. They didn't belong. But the title was broader than just these clothes. 'The way I work, it's always like an interference,' Michele says softly, thoughtfully. 'The work of a creative director over the past 20 years, it's being an *interferenza* or interference in the story of a brand, in the work of someone else. And it's beautiful, the way that two different things, they go together – they come together, to create something new.'

His *interferenza* is especially pointed at Valentino. You wonder at the common ground to be found between a fastidious couturier who, as a child, perhaps apocryphally, cried until he vomited when his mother tried to make him add a 'coarse' bow-tie to an outfit, and the aforementioned madcap creative chaos that had characterised Michele's approach to fashion since he first emerged on the global stage as creative director of Gucci a decade ago. You can imagine the legendarily *soignée* Swans who comprised Valentino's imperious aristocratic clientele turning up their noses at the grubby, bohemian, rock-and-roll waifs and strays that Michele adores. And, although he fits right in to Valentino's office, Michele himself readily acknowledges those dichotomies, even in terms of the continuum of the house's creative direction. 'Pierpaolo and Maria Grazia, they were like the nephew and niece of Valentino,' says Michele of Piccioli and Chiuri, the designers who led the house's creative direction – first as a duo, then Piccioli solo – between 2008 and 2024. They began work at the label in 1999, just before Michele himself joined



All clothes, from
a selection, Valentino
autumn/winter
2026 collection







‘I THINK THAT I’M TRYING TO INVENT AND CREATE A MOVIE AROUND A WORLD. I ALWAYS LOOK AT THE BIG PICTURE’

Gucci, culminating in a long stint as its creative director. ‘I’m the really new one,’ is how Michele describes his place at Valentino, given that many members of staff have served for multiple decades. ‘I’m looking at the things as a guest or the new inhabitant of the house.’

That is how Michele can challenge our preconceptions of Valentino, by mashing together edge with elegance, by twisting those hallmark evening dresses with something as simple as the kind of wrong shoe, glove or skew-whiff hat that Mr Valentino himself would never have dreamt of adding. Yet there are undeniable links forged between the founder and his newest guest. An unexpected one is glamour, something you readily associate with Valentino’s sleek evening gowns, for instance. They’re almost synonymous. Michele? With collections that have referenced the geek chic of *The Royal Tenenbaums*, not so much. But Michele begs to differ. ‘I’ve been very attracted to the glamorous world when I was younger, from Hollywood, from Jean Harlow... I’m discovering that I like glamour also from my point of view.’ He smiles. ‘I think I’ve been very rebellious, playing this game.’

Hollywood is an interesting take – because cinema is something else that directly connects the two. While an assistant at Jean Dessès in the 1950s, Valentino sketched ‘dream dresses’ for the actresses of his day – one of the first was named Elizabeth, as in Taylor. (Valentino would later dress her, possibly most famously for her final wedding, to Larry Fortensky, in 1991.) Michele, too, has a fascination with film; his mother worked at Cinecittà, the famed Roman studios, assisting a movie executive, exposing her son to the spectacle of Italy’s own Hollywood, peopled with Fellini, Rossellini, Bertolucci and the rest – including, actually, Taylor, during her turn in Mankiewicz’s 1963 *Cleopatra*. Michele’s mother used to tell him stories about rubbing shoulders with her at coffee shops in the city.

Michele, accordingly, compares himself to a film director. ‘I think that I’m trying to invent and create a movie around a world,’ he says. ‘I always look at the big picture.’ And, like a director, he sees his role as trying to ‘invent with this script something new’.

Unlikely though it seems, it is undeniably true that Michele’s Valentino is rooted in the script written by the founder, to a far greater degree than his predecessors. ‘I don’t feel guilty taking different things,’ he says, and he has, accordingly, plundered the archives, referencing obscure grabs from Valentino’s 1980s heyday, which Michele finds perpetually fascinating. In his first collection, there was a jumble of outright referential pieces, from filmy lace dresses to Coromandel-sequined jackets (a note: Valentino’s versions predate Karl Lagerfeld’s at Chanel by six years). His first haute couture show proposed a jumbotronic-scale reissue of a red ruffled tulle dress photographed by Deborah Turbeville in 1977. And some other looks might graft the exquisite draped bodice of a *Bonfire of the Vanities* Valentino evening

gown to jeans, say, or transpose a filmy lace lady-who-lunches blouse to top off a pair of grungy Y-front briefs on a guy.

Michele was born in 1972 and grew up in Rome: he remembers his first sighting, aged 13, of Mr Valentino, clutching his pugs and framed through the windows of the new McDonald’s in Piazza di Spagna. (How about that for the type of high-low contrast that electrifies Michele’s work?) ‘He was like an epiphany,’ he says, recalling that unlikely first sighting. ‘Like a god.’

Mr Valentino was – is – thus revered in his adopted hometown. He actually grew up in Voghera in Lombardy, some 300 miles away, but through sheer force of will, became the most Roman of couturiers, indelibly entwined with the Eternal City. When the designer died in January, aged 93, his funeral had the scale and ceremony of that of a state potentate. As a form of homage, Michele opened his following haute couture show with a slender column dress in Valentino red. The Roman ready-to-wear offering closed with a similar number that seemed a throwback to a Valentino original, but wasn’t. ‘That dress, it looked so Valentino,’ he says. ‘I was thinking about the era of Elsa Peretti working with Tiffany – the shape must be very organic and chic, but also sexy, because you can really feel the body inside. I was trying to say, this is not just a colour, this is a statement, it’s a state of mind, of life, of the way that you want to look and how the women were... There was nothing, just a pair of earrings and the dress. And it’s not really me.’

Facing off with that legacy must be daunting – to throw out another Roman reference, a designer like Michele has to be Janus, looking back and forwards at the same time. He was also, perhaps, glancing over his shoulder to see the reactions of Valentino and Giammetti, both looming presences. Giammetti attended Michele’s shows for the brand, applauding loudly; and although Valentino was too unwell to be there in person, Michele could still sense him. ‘It’s very strange, that he is not any more with us.’

Did he ever seek Valentino’s approval? Michele takes a moment to pause, to reflect. ‘It probably was something unconscious,’ he says, slowly. ‘I would say yes, because knowing that Mr Valentino was probably watching the show... I feel always very free and very connected with the things that I’m doing, but I think that, in a very unconscious way, something was going on inside me. And, as you know, sometimes that’s stronger than the conscious way.’

It’s also a natural question to ask what he feels he has inherited from Valentino – aesthetically, and philosophically. ‘He founded this brand and he really showed the world the power of imagination, the power of creativity, the power of a colour, the power of an attitude. It’s like the power of the little detail, on these huge frescoes. I have never been in such a powerful brand in terms of creation.’ □





The Bait

Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines, and silver hooks.

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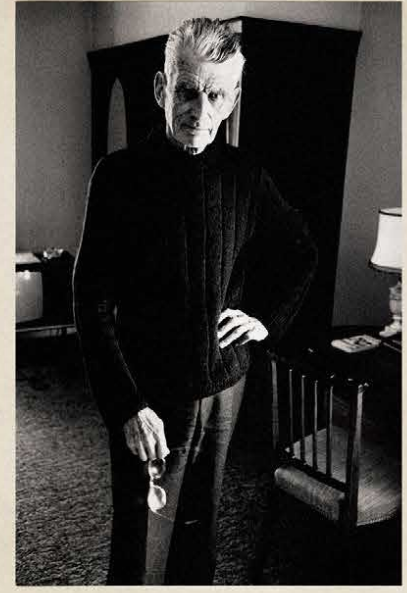
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Clockwise from top left: John Donne.
Zadie Smith. Oscar Wilde. Edith
Wharton. George Eliot. Samuel
Beckett. Virginia Woolf. Chimamanda
Ngozi Adichie. Joan Didion



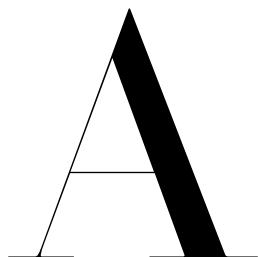
JOHN DONNE

AND OTHER

CATWALK ICONS

For the bestselling author *Katherine Rundell*, style is a language of its own. She explains why the literary canon is her most enduring source of fashion inspiration

Portraits by *PAWEL PYSZ*



few days ago, it was the preview party for my new book, *The Neverfear*. And I had no idea what to wear. When I don't know what to wear, I often end up thinking about John Donne for inspiration. He was the greatest poet

of sex and love in the English language; a contemporary of Shakespeare, he wrote about desire in a way that hasn't been equalled before or since. He was also fantastically handsome and seriously into fashion, and a man who understood that clothes are more than the sum of their stitching and cloth: they are a form of language.

People appear in Donne's poetry using clothes as a bid for status, as armour, and as accidental evidence of their susceptibility to being sartorially hoodwinked. Donne lived at a time when clothing was regulated by a very literal fashion police – the Elizabethan 'sumptuary laws' had decreed that, for instance, only the royal family could wear purple silk, while only knights' wives could appear in taffeta – and therefore nobody was under the impression that the question of how to dress was frivolous: over-padding your hose could land you in prison. But it was, too, a more fundamental understanding: I wrote in my biography of

Donne, *Super-Infinite*, that he understood that when we get dressed, we ask something of the world. All clothes speak. They say *desire me*, or *oh ignore me*, or *endow my words with greater seriousness than you would were I not wearing this hat*.

A couple of years later, *Super-Infinite* took on a fashion life of its own. It was read by Andreas Kronthaler at Vivienne Westwood and became the inspiration for his spring/summer 2023 collection, together with an accompanying ad campaign shot by Juergen Teller. The programme notes for the show consisted largely of quotations from my book: not a place I had expected Donne to appear. The show opened with a patent-leather dress forged like Renaissance armour and styled with rhinestone-encrusted knight's boots. Male models wore underpants embroidered with Donne's imagery of concentric circles. One model had a ruff covering their entire head.

It gave me great pleasure to think that, in the 10 years the book and the research took me, I had been unknowingly committing an act of fashion. I do not, while I write, dress stylishly, though I do dress purposefully. My subconscious interprets beautiful clothes both as fragile and as demanding constant attention in their own right, and therefore I find it much harder to write in a skirt or anything silk. I dislike synthetics and so if



Katherine Rundell

I were to describe my dream working look, it would be ‘the man in the 1920s countryside-house party who is murdered first’: thick high-waisted wool trousers with a pleat, a brushed-cotton shirt with frayed collar and cuffs, a jersey, good leather boots. I need, in order to write, clothes that can mind themselves and intrude not at all on the imagination: nothing that demands anything of me. (Conversely, a friend of mine, when writing her master’s thesis, used to dress in a pencil skirt and heels when the work was going badly, so that she could pretend she was her own secretary, working dispassionately on a project without the neurotic intensity that often comes with academic work.)

My fashion icons have rarely been Hollywood stars. Their style always seemed to me as though someone did it for them. It looked to my young self like the opposite of freedom and creativity. My icons have instead been writers, people who see clothes as language: the upturned collar of Albert Camus, the theatricality of Colette, James Baldwin wearing a scarf as a tie and velvet trousers in San Francisco in 1969, the purest iteration of cool on the planet in that moment. Joan Didion and her packing list: ‘2 skirts, 2 jerseys or leotards, 1 pullover sweater.’ And in an age of AI slop and falling numbers of those who read for pleasure, I believe that glamour helps us fight the good fight. If every schoolroom had that black and white picture of Samuel Beckett wearing his fisherman’s jumper and his battered old flannels and looking like a sartorial god, then I am convinced more kids would start reading; and they would discover the austerity and the sharp thinking of Beckett’s mind match the sinuous elegance of his clothes.

Clothes cannot be escaped. George Eliot understood, like Donne, that it is impossible to wear silent clothes. *Middlemarch* has one of my most-loved openings in literature, a description of Dorothea Brooke: ‘Miss Brooke had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress. Her hand and wrist were so finely formed that she could wear sleeves not less bare of style than those in which the Blessed Virgin appeared to Italian painters; and her profile as well as her stature and bearing seemed to gain the more dignity from her plain garments, which by the side of provincial fashion gave her the impressiveness of a fine quotation from the Bible, — or from one of our elder poets, — in a paragraph of to-day’s newspaper.’ Dorothea’s dressing to appear not to think about clothes is itself a form of thoughtful dressing. (Eliot, one of my great heroes, is also proof that it’s not always a gift to be beautiful. She was a plain child in the opinion of the day; it was thought so remarkably plain that nobody would marry her. Henry James described her as ‘magnificently ugly, deliciously hideous’. Her father decided to educate her sufficiently to earn a living of her own. Had Mary Ann Evans been born with a button nose, we might have been denied some of the greatest works of art in the English language.)

Virginia Woolf was haunted both by the pleasure of clothes and by the constant unease that she was getting it wrong. (‘This is the last day of June & finds me in black despair because Clive laughed at my new hat.’) She wrote in her diary: ‘I must remember to write about my clothes next time I have an impulse to write. My love of clothes interests me profoundly: only it is not love; & what it is I must discover.’ She knew that the trouble with getting dressed is that it is a double-edged dilemma: one part frustration and despair at the time, the cost, the effort, the

not knowing if you look as you hope you look, the sense you could be doing something more useful and generous; but one part is pure joy and exhilaration, about making our choices freely, being who we want to be, the knowing what looks good, honouring the things we love, celebrating beauty, relishing ingenuity and tone, shine and sleekery, texture and colour and craft. Woolf wrote in *Orlando*: ‘There is much to support the view that it is clothes that wear us and not we them; we may make them take the mould of arm or breast, but they mould our hearts, our brains, our tongues to their liking.’ They are quicksilver, slippery things, clothes: they hold history, class, wealth, domination and aggression, nuances and uncertainties in them, and also the joy of discovering what it is to have found a language you carry silently on your body. If one has the luck and luxury of time and a small amount of money, it is worth spending them in learning what it is that one might take joy in saying. But there are many who have financial interest invested in making you believe that only they have the answer to the question of beauty: those are people to defy.

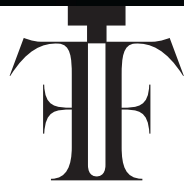
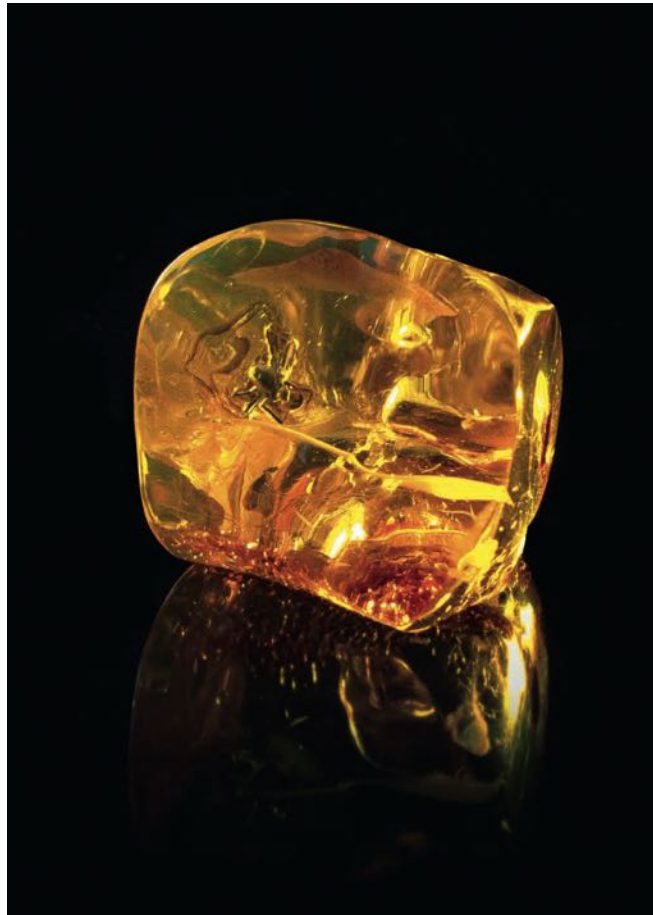
I am not a sportsperson, unless you count reading as a niche sport, but I would gladly spend time conjuring a perfect fantasy team of sartorially glorious writers. My star striker, in the number-nine shirt, would be John Donne. In central midfield, the well-known combination of Dolly Alderton in malibu feather cuffs, Samuel Beckett and Jane Austen in carefully chosen muslin. Playing out on the wings, Joan Didion and TS Eliot in his beautiful chalk stripe. For central defence, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for her use of print as a kind of song. Then Colette: her books championed the honest expression of female desire, and she was one of the great cross-dressers and inventors of looks – Chanel avant Chanel. Also in the line-up, Lemn Sissay: a beautiful writer and a brilliant man, and a genius with colour. He wears saffron in ways that would reward much study. The sweeper is Zadie Smith, whose consistent style and elegance is so versatile that she can play anywhere on the pitch. Virginia Woolf is in goal. The subs bench is also a thing of wonder, with Vita Sackville-West, James Baldwin, and Donna Tartt and the bold, emphatic shoulders of her suits.

Perhaps the best clothes are the ones that give you courage. Bill Cunningham famously said: ‘Fashion is the armour to survive the reality of everyday life.’

I am not myself stylish – I have met too many truly stylish people to be in any doubt of that – but I have a handful of outfits that give me courage. Max Mara and Lardini skirts that I wear with Chanel boots bought on Vestiaire, and an embroidered top I bought in Singapore when I was faced with a thousand children and realised I had not packed anything to wear for them. (Never make the mistake of thinking children don’t notice your clothes. They do, in particular your shoes, if they are sitting on the floor.) A dress made for me by Barbara Casasola, tight at the waist. A red tartan skirt and a red Vivienne Westwood dress. For the book party, I ended up wearing a gold jumpsuit by Alice Temperley, borrowed from a much taller friend. *The Neverfear* itself is about peril and joy, based around the tasks of Hercules and the seizing of a golden apple. It is a Herculean job, getting clad in a world: but there is gold in it. *Katherine Rundell is the author of ‘Impossible Creatures’. The third book in her series ‘Impossible Creatures: The Neverfear’ (£16.99, Bloomsbury) is published on 27 August.* □

The
A M B R É E
Fragrance Family

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 layers.



BAZAAR

— beauty —

EDITED BY
KATY YOUNG

GOLDEN YEARS

Look created using
Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 365
Charmed Green palette,
Dior Backstage Rosy Glow
Stick in 107 Dragonfruit, Dior
Backstage Glassy Glow
Stick in 098 Glazed Mint
and Rouge Dior On Stage
Shine 999 lipstick.

Angel eyes

Dance the night away in shimmering Seventies-style make-up looks, courtesy of Dior's master of maquillage Peter Philips. Plus: hi-tech tools to promote wellbeing; a fresh incarnation of an iconic fragrance; and our beauty director's favourite longevity booster

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her eye. She has a light-colored eye, possibly blue or grey. Her eye makeup is dramatic, featuring a thick, shimmering green eyeshadow on the lid and a gold or yellow shimmer on the lower lid. Her eyelashes are long and dark. Her fingers, visible in the foreground, are painted with a dark, glossy nail polish that has a gold shimmer. The skin is fair and has a soft, natural-looking glow.

NIGHT FEVER

Turn up the heat on pigments by applying washes of colour that offer a gentler glow, as seen here with Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 365 Charmed Green, which adds lustre on the eyes, Dior Forever Glow Luminizer in 04 Pink Strobe on cheeks, and a silky layer of Rouge Dior On Stage Matte in 346 Auburn Mystery on the lips. Nails painted with Dior Vernis in 309 Charm provide the final flourish.

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Press play on a make-up palette of greens, golds and pinks for a Seventies-inspired soft-focus look, presented here by Dior Makeup's creative and image director Peter Philips, using the Dior On Stage collection

Photographs by *DAVID FERRUA* Styled by *TANIA RAT-PATRON*





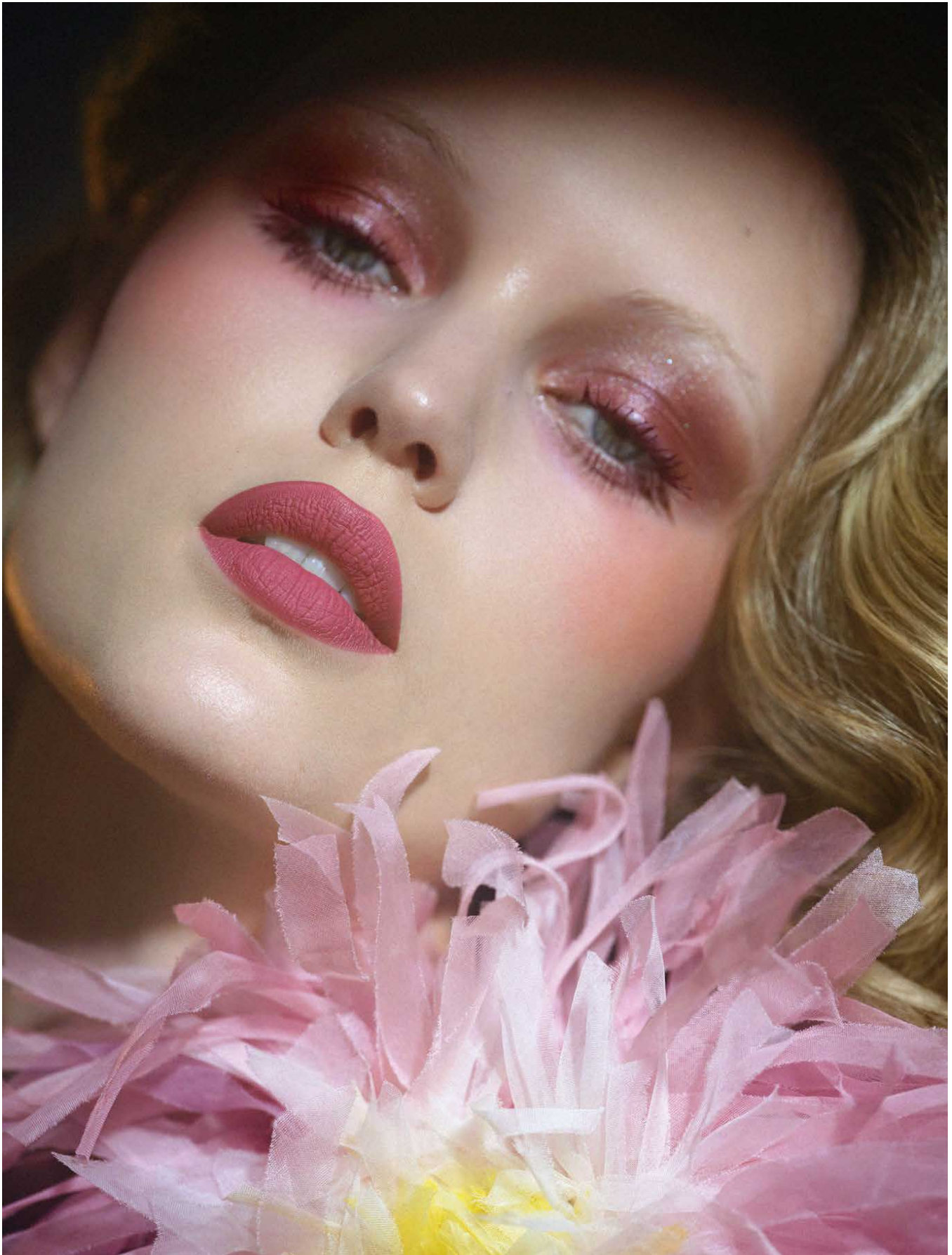
SMOKE ON THE WATER Berry tones offer a glamorously grown-up take on the smoky eye this season, as illustrated here with Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 883 Lucky Rosewood used as eyeshadow, Diorshow Overvolume in 971 Overplum for the blush and Dior Addict lipstick in 541 Wishes.





SHADOWPLAY

Use colour to highlight features, as seen here with Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 883 Lucky Rosewood, which brings iridescence to the lids, Dior Backstage Glassy Glow Stick in 001 Glazed Pink and 035 Glazed Ice to make cheeks look fuller, and Rouge Dior On Stage Ink Blur in 200 Nude Pulse to plump the lips.



THE ROSE For a masterclass in tonal make-up, Philips combined rose gold, candy and petal pink, using different textures. Lustrous Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 883 Lucky Rosewood is worn as shadow, Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in 103 Toffee gives a glazed flush, and Rouge Dior On Stage Matte in 383 Mauve D-Vibe offers a pretty matte lip.

SUGAR, SUGAR

Contrasting candy colours are seamlessly blurred and blended for a sweetly harmonious palette.

Here, Philips used Diorshow 5 Couleurs in 365 Charmed Green on the lids and Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in 015 Cherry on the cheeks, with Dior Addict in 521 Grigri on the lips.

THE BESTSELLING Harper's BAZAAR BEAUTY ICONS BOX

From award-winners to cult classics, this collection features our best-loved beauty icons in one luxurious edit: 13 beauty favourites that belong in every routine. Worth £496, this box is yours for just £96

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WHAT KATY DOES

Our beauty director *Katy Young* reveals the secrets of her routine



MAC Strobe Beam Liquid Blush, £22
Nars Insatiable Liquid Blush, £35.50

NEW BLOOM
Finding the perfect blush for your complexion is about choosing the right texture as much as the shade. My favourites include a velvety cream by *Violette_FR* that melts into a powder, and liquid formulas by *Nars* and *MAC*.



Violette_FR Plume Blush, £35



Estée Lauder Glimmer eau de parfum, £72 for 50ml

Perfect blend

Created by a dream team of world-class perfumers – including my all-time favourite, *Dominique Ropion*, the talent behind *Portrait of a Lady* – *Estée Lauder's Glimmer* eau de parfum, a blend of raspberry, rose and amber, is full of warmth and magnetism.



NINA RICCI

Time machine

Lancôme has worked with a Swiss bio-tech company on a pioneering new skincare line to boost cell longevity. Test your skin's biological age with a *CellBio Print Machine* at a *Lancôme* counter, then return after three months of using the products to measure their effects.



Lancôme Absolue Longevity MD, from £100



K18 FutureIQ Hair Longevity Serum, £115

The long game

'This is about future-proofing your hair density and pigment,' says *Tom Smith*, *K18's* global ambassador, of the brand's new Hair Longevity serum. 'There hasn't been anything that does those two things together before.' Build the serum into your daily routine and you can expect to see results within three months.



Kama Ayurveda KumKumadi Oil, £135

MAD ABOUT...

Each bottle of *Kama Ayurveda's KumKumadi Oil* uses the antioxidant properties of more than 600 saffron petals for the most luxurious skin therapy.



BEST FOR REDUCING STRESS

Nurosym, £599

With vagus-nerve stimulation designed to support nervous-system balance, this promises to relieve mental and physical tension.



BEST FOR HEALTH TRACKING

Oura Ring 5, £399

A sleek wellness monitor that measures sleep, stress, heart health and recovery, now in a slim titanium design.



BEST FOR CONTOURING

Ziip Halo 2.0, £379.99

This sculpting tool uses microcurrents to lift and tighten the skin while promoting lymphatic drainage and easing redness.



BEST FOR HYDRATION

Shark Beauty FacialPro Glow, £299.99

Exfoliation, hydration and hot-and-cold therapy tackle impurities and puffiness, promoting a brighter complexion.



BEST FOR SLEEP

Ozlo Sleepbuds, £299

Listen to a podcast or music or create a silent soundscape using these noise-cancelling earbuds, with sensors that detect when you fall asleep.

THE BEAUTY EDIT

GADGETS

The most advanced technology to try in 2026, from health trackers to hair saviours



BEST FOR BRIGHTENING

Nooance Smartech Elite X600, £699.99

Six hundred LED bulbs give even red-light coverage to aid elasticity and counteract the appearance of fatigue.



BEST FOR TEETH

Oral-B iO10 Electric Toothbrush, £800

Achieve optimal coverage, brushing time and pressure with this dental tool, which has settings for issues such as gum care and whitening.



BEST FOR SKIN REPAIR

Foreo FAQ501, £449

This LED device offers broad-spectrum and narrow-wavelength light therapy to target fine lines, sun spots and uneven texture.



BEST HAIR DRYER

GHD Speed, £299

GHD's fastest ionic dryer uses dual-airflow technology that combines warm and cool air streams to minimise heat damage and protect the scalp.



BEST CURLING TOOL

Dyson Airwrap Co-anda2x Multi-Styler, £579.99

This delivers airflow 30 times stronger than previous models for fast-drying, smoothing and volumising results.

BEAUTY MOODBOARD

Crush Absolu signals a bright new mood for Chanel's Coco Mademoiselle fragrance family

Since launching in 2001, Coco Mademoiselle has captivated legions of fans – enough to make it the leading pillar within Chanel's fragrance line in the UK. Its universe includes a hair mist, bodycare products and even a hydrating 'perfume primer' designed to boost the intensity of the scent. This year, Chanel's master perfumer Olivier Polge introduces its most audacious version yet: Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu. 'It is inspired by the idea of a new beginning and the feeling of something unexpected: an encounter that jolts you awake,' says Polge. This translates into a dazzling show-stopper that opens with a hit of succulent lychee and grapefruit – fruity notes that bring a vibrancy to its floral-amber composition. Opulent patchouli, plush vanilla and dry, woody vetiver add depth for a scent that lingers until the morning after.

For Polge, working with Chanel is a family affair (his father Jacques was its nose for 37 years), yet Crush Absolu demonstrates his intention to bring a contemporary edge to the maison's storied perfume collection. 'The time was right for a fragrance that reflects a fresh start,' he says. 'It offers a sensory and emotional experience for a new era, capturing the spirit of boldness.' With its rich textures and lasting *sillage*, the result is even more exuberant than the beloved original. MEDINA AZALDIN

*Chanel Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu eau de parfum,
£160 for 100ml.*



Kitty
D'Alessio and
Jacques Polge



Olivier Polge


MAGNUM[®]
true to pleasure



mini
MOMENTS OF PLEASURE (M)

BAZAAR

— e s c a p e —

EDITED BY
HELENA LEE

Take the plunge

Bel Powley and Douglas Booth snorkel with sharks in the Indian Ocean on their Maldives honeymoon. Plus, we embark on two safaris – an African adventure and a tiger-spotting trip in Asia – and the designer Huishan Zhang takes us on a scenic tour of his hometown in China

Baa Atoll in the Maldives

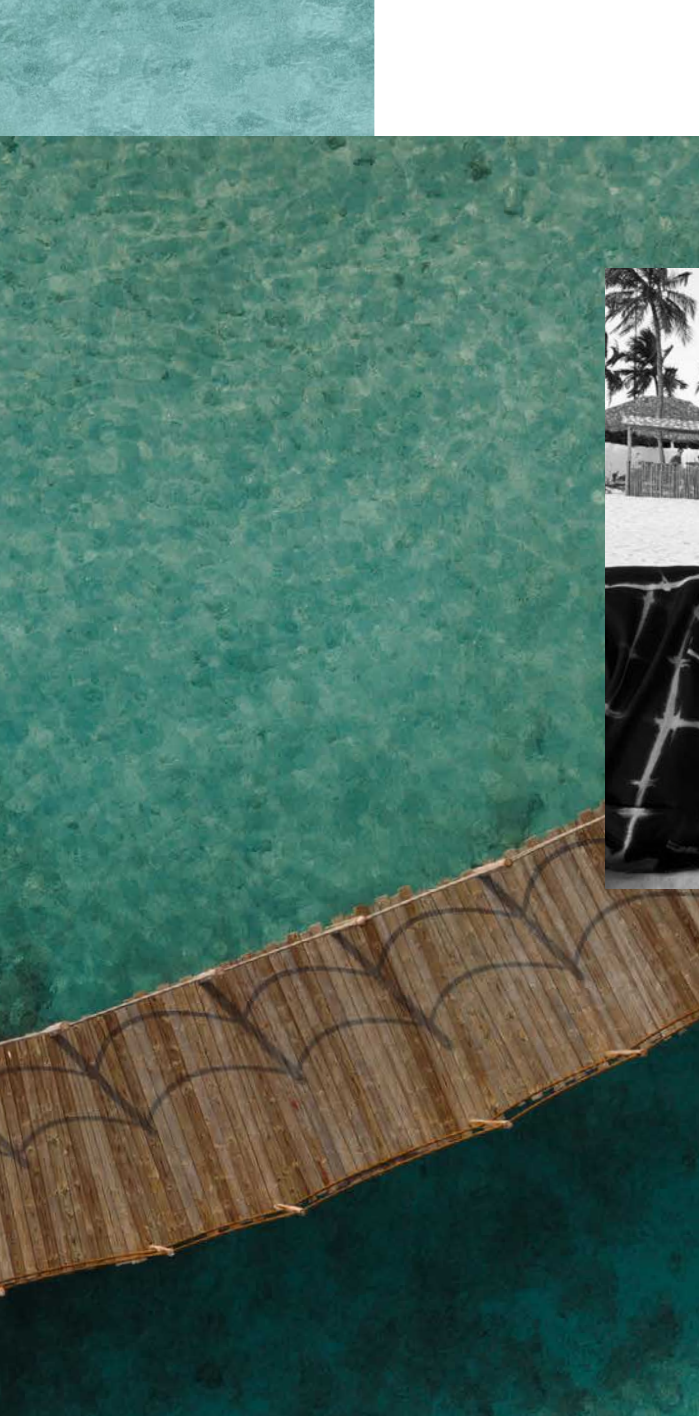
Just the two of us

For the not-so-newlyweds *Bel Powley* and *Douglas Booth*, a deferred but blissful honeymoon in a picture-perfect Maldives hideaway proved that good things come to those who wait





*Clockwise from left:
Douglas Booth and
Bel Powley. The Flying
Sauces restaurant
at Soneva Fushi.
The Gaucho Grill.
Opposite: Bel Powley*



WHEN WE BOOKED SONEVA IN THE MALDIVES FOR OUR long-awaited honeymoon, more than two years after our wedding, we had little idea of what to expect. We had heard whispers, of course: people talking about it as though it wasn't quite real, or maybe wanting to keep it secret for themselves. Now that we've been, it's easy to understand why.

We arrived by seaplane after a pitstop in Soneva's impossibly chic private lounge in Malé, the capital, where we were able to freshen up after the long-haul flight. When we landed on that perfect turquoise ocean, a speedboat arrived almost as if by magic and on went our luggage and shoes. We didn't see the latter until we stepped back onto the plane home.

The whole arrival process is both smooth and relaxing as, unusually, there's no formal check-in – you're taken straight to your villa. The interiors are beautifully pared-back, both organic and luxurious, crafted with warm wood and other natural materials, as though borrowed from the landscape itself. The deck of our villa had an outdoor bath surrounded by dense plants and trees, while an alfresco kitchen was furnished with minibars stocked with cold beers and juices ready for long afternoons in

ESCAPE

the sun. Beyond the deck, we had our own stretch of beach, on which there were two loungers on the white sand overlooking the crystal-clear water.

All guests are assigned a butler, and ours was just a WhatsApp away whenever we wanted to book excursions or make a dinner reservation. He had a talent for anticipation: certain things would happen before we'd even thought to ask, such as our preferred wine being chilled ahead of dinner, or ice and ingredients for our favourite cocktail arriving at the villa just in time for sunset.

Soneva Fushi coined the idea of 'barefoot luxury', and it encapsulates that concept perfectly. Located in the Baa Atoll, the hotel is set on its own luscious private island and feels large enough that there is always something new to discover. Cycling through the dense jungle pathways and finding hidden corners each day became one of the highlights of the trip: we encountered kitchen gardens supplying the restaurants, tiny bars tucked among herbs and flower beds, and dining tables hidden high in the trees where fruit bats drift overhead as the light fades.

We spent many of our days out on the water, snorkelling over bright coral gardens alongside turtles, with huge manta rays gliding silently beneath us. There's something slightly surreal about drifting through water that clear, spotting baby sharks in the shallows one minute and colourful tropical fish the next. On one occasion, we were dropped off on a deserted island for a private picnic. Swimming in the sea, completely alone apart from a few rays and turtles moving through the water around us, we had that rare feeling of total escape.

The food throughout the trip was exceptional. Every dish we ate felt thoughtful, beautifully made and unpretentious. What's more, dining went hand in hand with adventure: particularly memorable was the restaurant Flying Saucers, where you zipline through the forest to eat high above the island amid the treetops. We still think about the scallop carpaccio, which was simple, delicate and somehow perfect. Another favourite was So Primitive, where traditional Maldivian dishes such



as whole local fish marinated in traditional spices are cooked slowly beneath the sand and served by firelight on the beach.

One evening, we crossed a long wooden bridge to an incredibly romantic restaurant called Fresh in the Garden, where we had another superb meal of truffle tagliatelle with guinea fowl before lying together in a private treetop canopy staring up at the stars, finishing what may genuinely have been the best bottle of wine we've ever had – a chilled pinot noir.

What really stayed with us, though, was the people. There's such warmth to everyone who works at Soneva, which comes through in how the staff look after you. Nothing ever feels forced or rehearsed. And most outstanding is how knowledgeable everyone is, whether they're talking about wine, marine life, Maldivian ingredients or the native plants growing across the island.

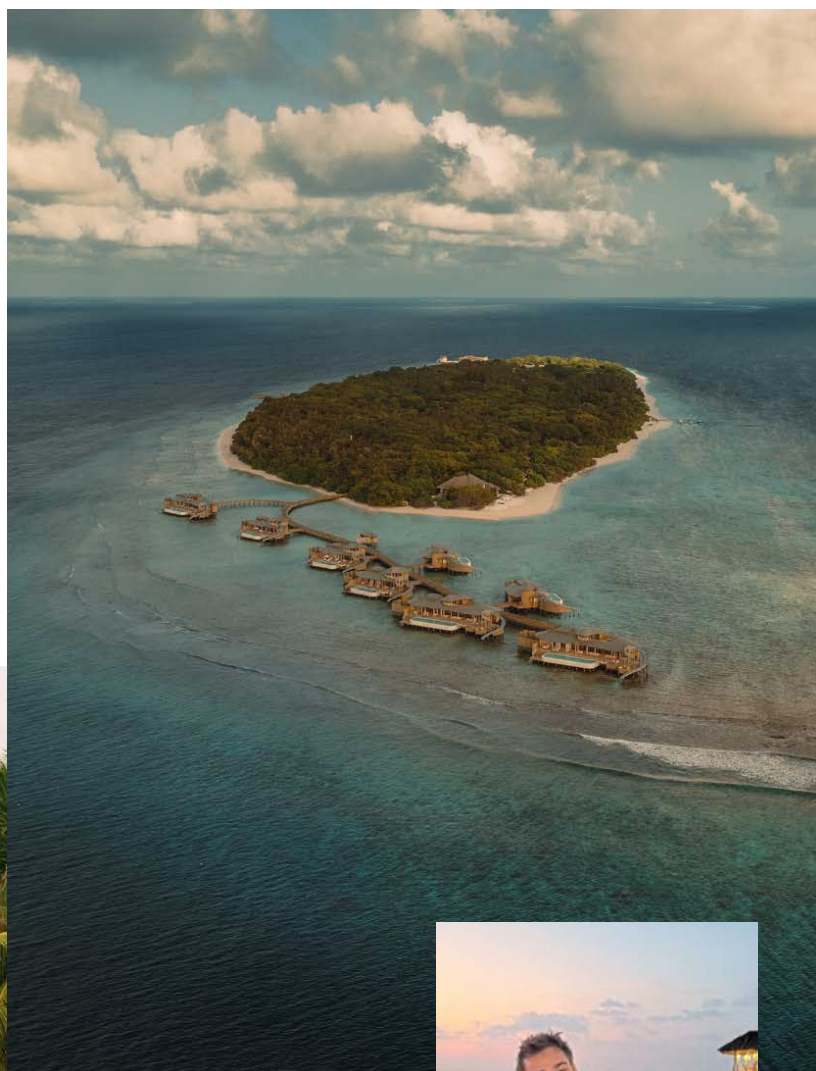
The second part of our honeymoon took us a 45-minute seaplane ride away to Soneva Secret, the fourth property from the brand, in the waters of the Makunudhoo, the westernmost atoll in the Maldives. The villas are even more remote, with a quieter, castaway feel. We would wake up to the sound of waves beneath our overwater villa and let the days drift by happily: swimming straight into the ocean from our villa steps, drinking margaritas in the afternoon sun, repeatedly throwing ourselves into the sea off the slide like children.

The team at Soneva Secret go out of their way to personalise everything. Ben, the executive chef, catered generously for our preferences: fresh, spicy Thai salads for lunch one day, Middle Eastern flatbreads and grilled meats the next evening. At one point, the staff even transformed part of our villa into a makeshift cinema set-up so we could watch the Arsenal match.

What both islands do brilliantly is offer luxury without stiffness. They are beautiful, yes, but also playful, relaxed and genuinely joyful. It was a honeymoon that was worth the wait. *A villa suite with pool at Soneva Fushi (soneva.com), from £1,810 a night. A one-bedroom beach villa at Soneva Secret, from £3,682 a night.* □



Right: the honeymoon couple. Below: a nine-bedroom residence at Soneva Fushi. Opposite, from top: a beach villa at the hotel. The Beach Reserve at Soneva Secret



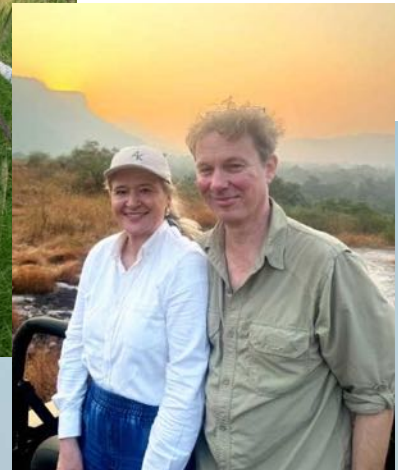
Above: Soneva Fushi. Right: a sunset dinner on the beach



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF DOUGLAS BOOTH AND BEL POWLEY, COURTESY OF SONEVA

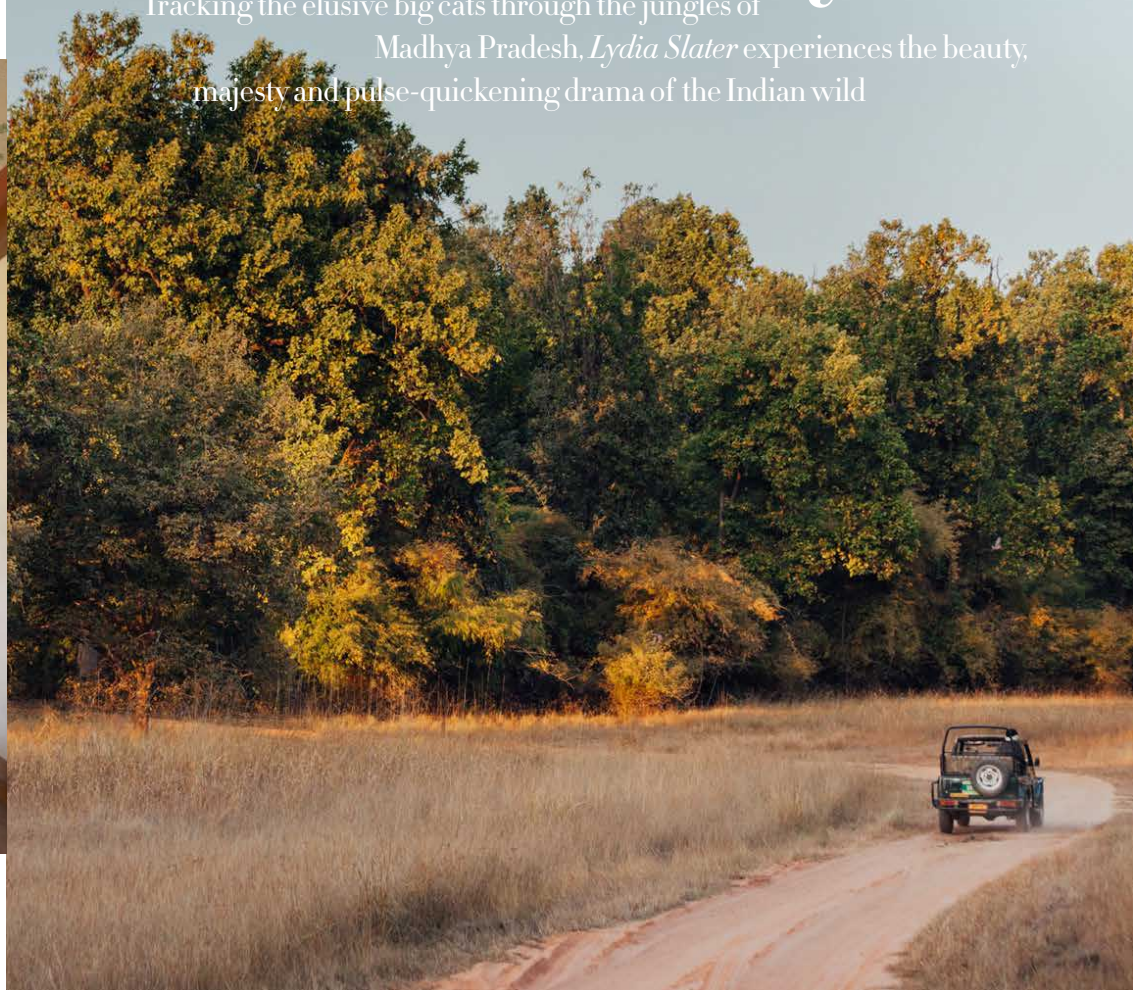


*Clockwise from below:
Lydia Slater and her husband in
Madhya Pradesh. On their safari.
Inside their luxury tent at Oberoi
Vindhya Vilas Wildlife Resort.
A langur monkey. The tent and
its private garden. Opposite:
a Bengal tiger, photographed
by the author's husband*



Tiger country

Tracking the elusive big cats through the jungles of
Madhya Pradesh, *Lydia Slater* experiences the beauty,
majesty and pulse-quickenning drama of the Indian wild





IT'S ABOUT 6.30AM, AND MY HUSBAND AND I ARE SITTING IN an open-top 4WD in a clearing, swathed in blankets, clutching hot-water bottles and trying not to make a sound. The wildlife around us has no such inhibitions. As the sun climbs in the sky, the first alarm calls start: the sharp, coughing bark of a spotted deer, snarling grunts from the long-tailed langur monkeys patrolling the trees above our heads. 'Tiger is walking!' whispers Bhuwan, the naturalist who's accompanying us. Unconcerned by the growing hullabaloo, a crested hawk-eagle perched in a sal-tree ruffles its feathers against the morning chill.

We have journeyed to the Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh in search of these elusive, stripy kings of the jungle. Despite global conservation efforts, there are fewer than 6,000 tigers left in the wild, the majority of which are found in India. This park is home to 135 of the magnificent beasts – but that's still not even one tiger per square mile of terrain, so we're not taking anything for granted. Over the past 24 hours, we have seen encouraging signs of big-cat activity: there have been dinner-plate-size paw-prints; and a tree whose bark has been shredded to rags by enormous claws able to reach seven feet above the ground.

Now, a series of eerie groans resounds through the trees – it's a mother tiger, calling her cubs to breakfast. 'She must have a deer in there,' says Bhuwan, raising his voice to be heard over the increasingly hysterical monkeys. But after half an hour, we still haven't spotted so much as a stripe: perhaps she's telling the cubs to stay away while our 4WD is in situ? So we head to a fenced-off area where we can safely have our own breakfast – a wicker hamper of pastries, granola and samosas, washed down with hot coffee – served on the car's bonnet as we warm our chilled limbs in the sunshine.

It's not until later that afternoon that we strike it lucky. We're on the edge of a dried-up river when the langurs' warning calls start up again. But this tiger isn't trying to hide; indeed, his rumbling growls seem to shake the ground for several minutes before he prowls into view down the centre of the riverbed.

Bhuwan tells us he's a 'sub-adult male', but to us he looks enormous and startlingly orange. He pads along with relaxed power, utterly uninterested in our excited whispers, and we drive beside

the bank, keeping him in sight as long as possible, until he turns into a bamboo thicket for a nap.

Only then do I realise that I've been so awestruck by his presence that I have completely failed to take any pictures. But I don't care – the image of that big cat is, in true William Blake style, burning bright on my retina, and no fuzzy camera-phone picture can possibly compare. We are in *Jungle Book* territory here (Rudyard Kipling based the geography and wildlife of his famous children's book on Madhya Pradesh), but I've never understood why he made the tiger Shere Khan the villain of the story. There's certainly nothing mean or cowardly about this majestic creature – and, equally, nothing that would persuade me to get out of the vehicle in his presence.

It has been worth the considerable pilgrimage to get here: an overnight flight to Delhi, then a further 90-minute plane trip to Jabalpur and, finally, several hours in a car to reach the Oberoi Vindhavilas, which occupies a rural position a few miles outside the perimeter of the Bandhavgarh National Park.

I've stayed at several Oberoi resorts, and this is, by some margin, the least formal, designed to make guests feel as close as possible to nature. Our accommodation was described as a 'luxury tent', but any worries I had about roughing it are allayed when we enter our canopied bedroom to find it has polished-wood floors and glass doors opening onto an immaculate garden.

One night, we eat a multi-course dinner of Baghelkhandi specialities beside the lake, warmed by a campfire and lit by the stars. On another, we indulge in cocktails made with jungle herbs, gazing out at the gardens through the Crittall windows of the main building and talking tigers with the other guests.

Our days have a hallucinatory quality, starting with a drive through the dawn chill to reach the park, and ending with a trundle back into camp for a well-earned sundowner, overwhelmed with all we have seen for the first time.

As we've bounced around the park's miles of rutted tracks, we've encountered herds of spotted deer with furry antlers; and families of wild boars and golden jackals trotting through the grass. We've seen innumerable birds, from storks to kingfishers, marvelled at statues overgrown with creepers, shrieked at the sight of giant spiders and laughed at the goofy expression of a monitor lizard surveying us from a hole in a tree. Our team – Dev,

our driver, Manjit, the forest guide, and the erudite Bhuwan – have looked after us with extraordinary care, and I find myself welling up as we say goodbye to them on our final day.

It's an experience I'll never forget, I think to myself, and I'm right about that. On the way home, we stop in Delhi to do some Christmas shopping. We're outside Khari Baoli, the famous spice market, when I hear a series of explosive coughs just behind me. It's a perfectly normal occurrence here, the natural result of breathing in air that's laden with particles of peppercorns and powdered cinnamon; but for an instant, my heart skips a beat and I'm back in the jungle, hearing the alarm calls and scanning the undergrowth for a predator I'm longing – and fearing – to see. *Oberoi Vindhavilas Wildlife Resort (oberoihotels.com), from £550 a tent a night.* □

This tiger isn't
trying to hide; his
rumbling growls
shake the ground
before he prowls
into view

Animal magnetism

Beatrice Aidin falls for the breathtaking beauty of Tanzania, where the Serengeti's endless vistas reveal the natural world at its most magnificent



WE WERE ON SAFARI EVEN BEFORE WE arrived. Our group of six were invited to be the first guests at the new Wild Wakati Camp in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park, and as we gently bumped along the nine-mile dirt road towards the camp in a 4WD, we spotted a duo of crocodiles by a stream, one clenching his prey of zebra in his jaw, ensuring his companion didn't swipe it for his own lunch.

Shortly after, we stopped to admire a pride of sunbathing lionesses casually observing us from just feet away, then passed a dazzle of zebras and galloping giraffes. Warthogs chased their tails with dozily comedic charm; as it turns out, they are the Dorys of the Serengeti. 'They have a really short memory, so they

can start running and then forget why,' Slim, one of the guides, told us.

Although these sights were energising, we were weary after two flights from London, via Doha with a seven-hour layover to Kilimanjaro, where we were greeted by the founders of Wild Wakati: the Tanzanian safari guide Michael Shayo and the British hospitality entrepreneur Matt Wilkey. We spent a night at the Arusha Coffee Lodge, an hour-and-a-half drive from Kilimanjaro's airport, set within Tanzania's largest coffee plantation, to break up the journey before a final flight from Arusha to Seronera airstrip in the heart of the Serengeti. Two hours later – after our encounter with the crocodiles – we reached

PHOTOGRAPHS: WILD WAKATI CAMP; GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY; HUI CHEN/UNSPLASH

*Right: Wild
Wakati Camp.
Opposite, bottom:
a coffee plantation*



our home for the next five nights, greeted with smiles, singing and dancing by the staff, who were excited to welcome Wild Wakati Camp's first guests.

The reason that I wanted to visit Wakati was that they are doing things differently. This isn't just a camp: Shayo has created a hospitality-training ground for the employees. Many are industry newcomers from the local villages and the wider Maasai community, and are being mentored to prepare for future leadership roles.

It is a semi-permanent camp, and with no lasting footprint; the whole enterprise, which is solar-powered, can be lifted away without leaving a scar on the Serengeti. Energy and water consumption are low. Wakati has just been awarded membership of the Long Run, the world's largest nature-based tourism organisation for sustainable travel, which has strict criteria to join, proving its commitment to the 'four Cs' of conservation, community, culture and commerce.

That's not to say the accommodation was basic; Wakati offers what I'd describe as laid-back opulence. There are uninterrupted views stretching across nearly 40 miles of open wilderness. The 10 huge handmade canvas tents – including two with room for families – are crafted locally, as is the furniture. Inside, they are kitted out with emperor-size beds and come complete with en-suite bathrooms, flushing toilets, double sinks and a plumbed-in shower. I was most excited about the bucket shower, for which staff fill pails with solar-heated water and the flow is controlled via a pulley.

The weather was changeable – with two safaris a day, I felt as though I dressed for every season, from cold rain to soaring heat, but that is part of the fun of giving yourself up to nature. A 4.30am start for a ride in a hot-air balloon was thwarted by torrential rain, so we sat in the truck, drinking cups of coffee and eating cake. Our pilot Amanda Brodbeck, a two-time US Women's National Ballooning Champion from Colorado,

decided that we might have better luck the following morning.

And we did. My first time in a hot-air balloon was exhilarating. The sky was clear, so we spotted a herd of elephants elegantly plodding, led by the matriarch with the calves, the mothers bringing up the rear. Brodbeck pointed out herds of buffaloes, 'the most dangerous of the Big Five'. Fortunately, we were 6,000 feet above them, and after 45 minutes and more than 13 miles, we had also seen giraffes, antelopes, hyenas and lions.

Every evening, a team of three chefs would produce lavish meals: the local speciality 'bush chicken' – actually guinea fowl – or steak barbecued under the stars. We'd sip sundowners before making our way to the best spot for that night's sunset, as recommended by our guides via the 'bush telegraph' (WhatsApp to you and me).

Wakati means 'time' in Swahili. At this remarkable camp, we discovered endless adventure, with heart and soul at its core, and relished every minute of our Serengeti sojourn.

Wild Wakati Camp's full board and game packages (enduatacamps.com), from about £380 a person. □

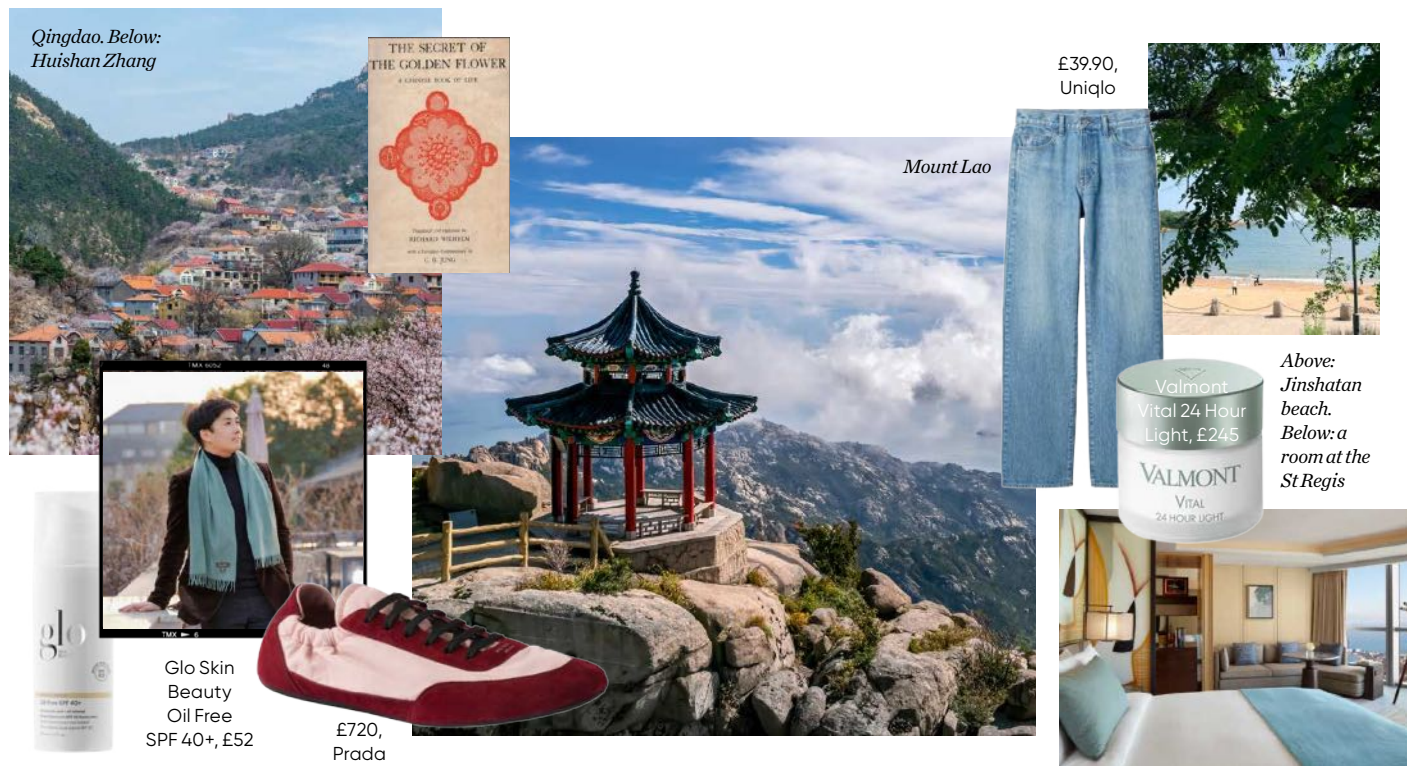
There are
views stretching
across nearly
40 miles of
open wilderness



INSIDER'S GUIDE

HUI SHAN ZHANG ON QINGDAO

The fashion designer reveals his favourite haunts in the city where he was born



Qingdao is my hometown. It's where I was born, where my parents live and where I have my atelier. Despite being China's second-largest seaport, the city is very relaxed, famous for Tsingtao beer and seafood. Many people have second homes here, because it's easy to get to from either Beijing or Shanghai.

The best time to visit is in the spring, when the cherry blossom is out, or in autumn. I would avoid the summer months, and especially the Beer Festival, because the place becomes packed with tourists. As there's sea on three sides of the city, it never gets too hot – even in July, the temperature doesn't go much above 30 degrees.

Qingdao is an architecturally unusual city because of its history. The Germans leased the territory in 1898, when they constructed the seaport, so it's mostly built in the Bavarian style, with red roofs and yellow walls. Yinyu Lane and Zhongshan Road are interesting for their architecture and the shopping.

The other German gift to the city is the famous lager. My favourite is the unfiltered draught beer that is only sold in Qingdao, often in a plastic bag. It's made using water from Mount Lao, and it's smooth, sweet and full of minerals.

Jinshatan (Golden Beach) is a huge powdery-sand beach on the Yellow Sea that offers various water sports. The city hosted all the 2008 Olympic sailing events, so there are lots of clubs where you can charter a boat or take lessons.

The beaches are lined with little cafés selling seafood, any of which will do you a great meal. Sundried meat and fish are local specialties, but I particularly like barbecued starfish, which tastes a bit like sweetcorn. ChuanGe YuShui Jiao is the place to go for seafood dumplings.

When I was small, my parents would take me for picnics up Mount Lao, which overlooks the city. I still come here whenever I need to clear my head, and I find the scenery so inspiring for my designs.

Mount Lao is renowned throughout China as the birthplace of Taoism. The mountain is covered with temples – the Taiqing Palace, which is more than 2,000 years old, is unmissable. It's also beautiful for hiking through the ancient woodlands or visiting Longtan Waterfall.

The St Regis has wraparound sea views and an amazing spa. If you're travelling with a group, I'd rent a whole historic house with a garden in the old quarter.

I do a lot of walking, so I typically wear relaxed jeans from Uniqlo. I have three pairs of Prada slip-on trainers in different colours – they're practical and comfortable as well as stylish. I also like Valmont skincare, which smells delicious, and I've just started using Glo Skin Beauty Oil Free SPF 40+ sunblock.

To read, I'll take *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. It's an ancient Taoist book on meditation that inspired Carl Jung's psychological approach, and is small but powerful. □



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BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Like-minded art lovers flocked together for the Royal Academy's annual celebration

PHOTOGRAPHS BY IONA WOLFF



Lily Allen and Jonah Freud



Philippa Perry



Clara Amfo



Susie Cave and Greta Bellamacina



Claudia Winkleman



Jessie Ware



Henry Holland

'Interconnectedness', the theme of 2026's Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, was embodied by its preview party: an evening that saw a coterie of artists, comedians and actors cross-pollinate with poets and pop stars. Lily Allen glided in, swan-like, wearing a feathered 16Arlington gown, on the arm of its designer Marco Capaldo. Sustained by British charcuterie, mead-owsweet margaritas and Fortnum & Mason Champagne, Greta Bellamacina chatted with Susie Cave, while Archie Madekwe and Grayson Perry, members of the committee, toasted the stellar submissions and the art world's official start to summer. In the courtyard, Katy Hessel and Grace Campbell created a dysfunctional family portrait with *Succession*'s ex-spouses Brian Cox and Harriet Walter. Later, Clara Amfo introduced a performance by the singer Sasha Keable, after which the gathering dispersed, but not before picking up a bergamot sorbet – and, perhaps, a new purchase – for the road. CB



Grayson Perry



Yinka Shonibare



Amber Anderson



Grace Campbell, Brian Cox, Harriet Walter and Katy Hessel



Eva Longoria



Conrad Shawcross and Rebecca Salter



Vick Hope



Annie Macmanus



Archie Madekwe

NEW WAVE

Animated by the spirit of Mexico, a chic crowd came together for a fiesta to remember

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OLIVER HOLMS



*Salma Hayek Pinault
and Michael B Jordan*



Charlotte Dellal



*Frederick Windsor and
Sophie Winkleman*



Jessica Gunning



Emilia Wickstead



Emily Maullis



Joy Crookes



Marisa Abela and Pixie Lott



Roksanda Ilinčić



Naomie Harris



*Isha Ambani and
Laila Gohar*



Alexa Chung



Jessie Ware



Hans Ulrich Obrist



Bettina Korek



Kristin Scott Thomas



Adwoa Aboah



Georgia May Jagger



Jenna Coleman



Rosie Huntington-Whiteley



Yinka Shonibare



Liza Marshall and Mark Strong

On a scorcher of a night, the Serpentine summer party celebrated its 25th annual pavilion – this year created by the Mexican studio Lanza Atelier, whose home country was at the heart of the festivities. A beaming Salma Hayek Pinault, the director Alfonso Cuarón and the film-maker Alejandro González Iñárritu co-hosted the carnivalesque soirée, which featured an all-women mariachi band and sculptural snacks by the food artist Laila Gohar that echoed the architecture. The chair of the host committee Isha Ambani caught up with Lauren Santo Domingo; Kristin Scott Thomas made a beeline for Richard E Grant; Sienna Miller and Alexa Chung compared outfits; and it was date night for several power couples, including Sophie Winkleman and Frederick Windsor, and Mark Strong and Liza Marshall. Perusing the Cecily Brown exhibition in the permanent gallery, Michael B Jordan discussed art – and the *Thomas Crown Affair* remake he was in town to film – with the Serpentine's director Hans Ulrich Obrist. As dusk fell, Emily Maitlis arrived straight from a long day at work, demanding cheerfully: 'Now where on Earth is the bar?' Happily, it wasn't far away – and ice-cold palomas flowed until late as the DJ's tunes picked up. CB

SOUND AND VISION

Music-world royalty joined cultural movers and shakers for an evening of revelry at the V&A

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE MARTINEZ



*Helen Fielding and
Mariella Frostrup*



Elizabeth Day



Bob Geldof



Jessie Ware



*Harris
Reed*



Sandy Powell



Helena Lee



Vick Hope



Few events could draw Londoners away from an England World Cup match, but the V&A's summer bash, held once more in the museum's courtyard, managed it. As spectacular foxglove arrangements rustled in the breeze and cream-suited bar staff circulated flutes of Nyetimber, Mick Jagger was joined for an extended chat and many mischievous laughs by Helen Fielding and Mariella Frostrup, who proceeded to rove around the party, arm-in-arm, 'looking for trouble', as the former put it.

Along with Bob Geldof, this year's committee – including Sandy Powell, Harris Reed and Yinka Ilori – eventually gathered to watch Jessie Ware, resplendent in yellow, give a bravura concert from the island in the middle of the pond. Her glorious vocals and disco fever prompted enthusiastic applause from the museum trustee Vick Hope and energetic dancing from Maya Jama to get the party truly started. CB



FLASH!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARIES

Edeline Lee's label and Lydia Slater, *Bazaar's* editor-in-chief, shared birthday celebrations

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE MARTINEZ



Edeline Lee and
Lydia Slater



Aki London



Soma Sara



Catriona Chandler



Andrea Thompson,
Edeline Lee
and June Sarpong



Florence Keith-Roach



Charity Wakefield



Lydia Slater



Jodhi May and Celia Imrie



Nazanin
Zaghari-Ratcliffe



Helena Lee and
Sarah Karmali

'Edeline Lee's dresses are so adored at *Harper's Bazaar* that we have to consult each other before parties to ensure we don't all arrive in the same gown in different colours,' revealed the magazine's editor-in-chief Lydia Slater, addressing a chic crowd at the new restaurant Aki London one May evening. In a double celebration, *Bazaar Privé* gathered to toast the designer's 15th anniversary ('We can now officially call ourselves teenagers,' Lee joked), which was also our editor's birthday. The women of the hour had arrived in Range Rovers to be greeted with cocktails, including a vodka gimlet that packed a serious punch. Celia Imrie, June Sarpong and Jodhi May mingled with *Privé* members among mannequins displaying exquisite creations by Lee, who handed each guest a signature hair ribbon by way of a party favour. After applauding the arrival of a fabulously ornate Lily Vanilli cake, everyone headed downstairs to Kiyori Bar for DJ sets from Gem Precious and Suni Side Up and dancing through the night.

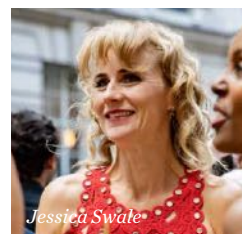
MARIE-CLAIRE CHAPPET

TOAST OF THE TOWN

Conversation (and fizz) flowed at *Bazaar's* sparkling soirée with Privé members and friends

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE MARTINEZ

'Ladies, and *some* gentlemen, pray silence for Lydia Slater!' came the pleasingly booming baritone of Jonathan Wright, president of Hearst Magazines International, before a hush descended over the *Harper's Bazaar* Privé summer party. On the spectacular terrace at Rosewood London, as guests enjoyed Laurent-Perrier Champagne and refreshing Hugo spritzes, our editor-in-chief raised a glass to the growing Privé community and introduced a whimsical performance by Levantes Dance Theatre. Narges Rashidi and Charity Wakefield compared notes on their near-identical lime-green dresses ('It's the colour of the summer!'), while the author Lucy Foley arrived in a classic LBD. The screenwriter Jessica Swale was busy singing the praises of the old-school rom-com when her eyes lit up, along with Rejina Pyo's, by the arrival of gourmet pizzas by Dinner for One Hundred. When the sun dipped, Sheila Atim and Zawe Ashton led a lively contingent, including Kukua Williams and Lara Mullen, indoors for cosy chats and delicious nightcaps. MARIE-CLAIRE CHAPPET □



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BAZAAR ESSENTIALS

TRANSFORMING CONFIDENCE: FROM MENTAL HEALTH NURSING TO ENTREPRENEUR

Before founding Skin & Soul Medical in Newcastle upon Tyne, Lucie Royer (BSc INP) spent years working as a mental health nurse, supporting people through some of life's most challenging moments. It was there she developed a deep understanding of the relationship between wellbeing, self-perception and confidence. An understanding that continues to shape her work today. While her career path changed, her purpose remained the same: helping people feel more comfortable within themselves. Through Skin & Soul Medical, Lucie has built a clinic centred on self-care, confidence and natural results, taking a holistic approach that considers the whole person rather than simply treating a concern.



Passionate about education and continual development, she regularly trains with leading practitioners around the world and recently launched The Academy by Skin & Soul Medical, mentoring the next generation of aesthetic professionals.

Today, Skin & Soul Medical is recognised as one of the North East's leading aesthetic clinics. For Lucie, however, success isn't measured by treatments performed, but by confidence restored, trust earned and lives positively impacted.

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As luxury embraces originality and meaningful design, SOHNAA represents a new voice from India, where exceptional craftsmanship meets artistic innovation to create a distinct language of adornment. www.sohnaa.com



Founded by award-winning designer Sonali Shah Sheth, the fine jewellery house was recognised among the top three jewellery startups in the world.

ADORA AESTHETICS

Heather Zade is the Founder and CEO of Adora Aesthetics and Adora Academy, a nationally recognized aesthetic leader, educator, and entrepreneur redefining excellence in medical aesthetics. As a board-certified Nurse Practitioner with more than 17 years of clinical experience, she has built a reputation for combining medical expertise, artistry,



and innovation to deliver natural, transformative results.

Known for her signature approach to facial harmonization

and her widely recognized 3-injection lip filler technique, Heather has become one of the most sought-after injectors in the country. Her work has earned her recognition as one of the Top 100 Aesthetic Injectors in the Nation for four consecutive years, solidifying her position as a trusted authority in the industry.

Beyond patient care, Heather is a passionate advocate for education and female entrepreneurship. Through Adora Academy, she has trained thousands of medical professionals, empowering the next generation of injectors with the skills, confidence, and clinical excellence needed to succeed. As a speaker, mentor, and business owner, Heather continues to break barriers in a rapidly evolving industry. Her mission is rooted in empowerment—helping women build confidence, embrace their individuality, and create lives and careers that reflect their fullest potential. Through leadership, innovation, and unwavering dedication, Heather is shaping the future of aesthetics while inspiring women to lead boldly and unapologetically.



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BAZAAR FASHION



THE ELAR LABEL: NEW DROP

THE ELAR LABEL has arrived.

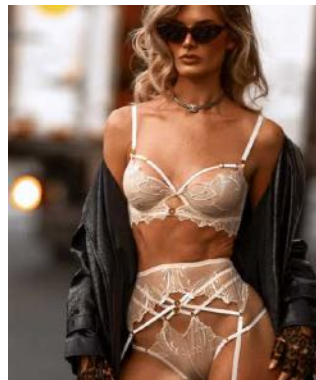
Launched in July, the debut collection brought a distinct perspective to British evening wear.

The designs focus on effortless silhouettes, refined tailoring and draped fluid forms that move with the body as well as enhance feminine curves. Now a second collection follows this September; equally considered, equally intentional. Sustainability is a founding principle of the brand, with each piece having been developed from deadstock fabrics sourced within the UK. Not only that, but every piece is hand made to order by the designer herself.

The result is high end evening wear that feels quietly luxurious.

Shop both collections at www.theelarlabel.com and follow @the.elar.label on Instagram and TikTok.

Bazaar readers receive 15% off with code **BAZAAR15** (valid until 31/10/26).



WHO ARE YOU WEARING FIRST?

Let's be honest: a lot of underwear feels like it was designed for staying invisible. It completely forgets that getting dressed should feel like awakening the goddess version of yourself. Based in New York, Maison ZIFAN creates couture lingerie designed to ensure that the moment you slip it on, you feel like the most feminine and powerful version of yourself. Crafted with Italian silk, Swiss embroidery, and hand-adorned Swarovski crystals, each piece treats intimate apparel as a deeply personal ritual, the very first, most essential layer of a woman's power. Because ultimately, your lingerie tells your story, and it shows the world exactly who you are before anything else.

Discover your most feminine power at www.maisonzifan.com | Instagram: @maisonzifan

"IF YOU SEE IT IN YOUR MIND, YOU WILL HOLD IT IN YOUR HANDS." – BOB PROCTOR

5D Yoga Loungewear was born from a vision shaped by resilience, movement and purpose. Inspired by a gap in Belfast's athleisure market, the brand was created to offer premium yoga and Pilates wear that combines style, quality and meaning.

Founded by an immigrant single mother, 5D is rooted in self-belief, freedom, community and conscious creation. More than activewear, it represents a mindset and a way of living with intention.



The name "5D" reflects a belief in growth, possibility and becoming the fullest version of yourself. It is a brand for those who move with intention, dress with purpose, and believe in creating the life they envision.



Discover more at 5dyogaloungewear.co.uk, follow @5dyogaloungewear, or scan the QR code to explore the collection.

CONSCIOUS LUXURY: THE ESSENCE OF LAYLA SWIMWEAR



Layla Swimwear is the embodiment of slow fashion, crafted for discerning individuals who value both style and sustainability. Designed with the vibrant spirit of Ibiza in mind and meticulously handmade in Bali, each piece reflects craftsmanship and ethical production. We use sustainable materials, ensuring minimal environmental impact while offering timeless designs. Layla Swimwear is more than just beachwear; it's a statement of conscious living.

Discover the collection and follow the journey at www.laylaswimwear.com



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Explore an exclusive collection of individually designed and hand made pieces inspired by the beauty and form of natural gems. Combining the architectural and the organic, each distinctive design is unique, using beautiful and unusual stones and settings which reflect the maker's passion for design. In addition to one off pieces there are also some limited edition runs available in very small numbers.



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CURATED FASHION FOR A MODERN WOMAN WITH PASSION FOR LIFE

Founded from a shared passion for timeless style and effortless elegance, Something Chic was created to help women feel confident in every aspect of their lives. The boutique offers a carefully curated collection of versatile, high-quality pieces designed to transcend seasons and trends. From elevated everyday wear to standout occasion dressing, each collection is selected with a focus on style, comfort, and confidence. More than just a fashion destination, Something Chic is dedicated to inspiring women to embrace their individuality and build wardrobes that make them feel their very best.

Scan the QR code to discover the latest collection.

Exclusive Harper's Bazaar Offer: Use code

HARPERS15 to enjoy 15% off your purchase.



BAZAAR FASHION

COPPERFIL – WOVEN IN LIGHT

Born in Paris, CopperFil reimagines copper as a luxury material for the modern world. Founded by Maria Roma, the brand creates handcrafted bags and jewellery handwoven entirely from copper wire, transforming an ancient metal into contemporary works of wearable art. Guided by a vision of beauty with purpose, CopperFil draws inspiration from light, nature and human



Photo: Pauline Garraud



connection. Each piece reflects a meeting of craftsmanship and meaning, inviting the wearer to express individuality while carrying a quiet sense of strength and harmony. At its heart, CopperFil is guided by the belief that beauty can inspire light, connection and positive transformation.



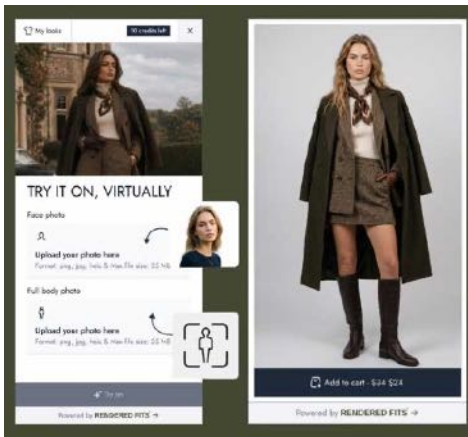
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Flare Street flares are defined by a sophisticated reimagining of 60s & 70s glamour, every item offers a statement silhouette and unrivaled allure. Each pair of Flare Street is meticulously produced within their private Melbourne workshop, prioritising impeccable craftsmanship, slow fashion and ethical transparency. From signature bell bottoms to exclusive textiles and motifs, the label fuses heritage with a high-fashion sensibility for the sustainably minded, conscious wardrobe. Find Flare Street flares in XXS-3XL and made in limited editions. Shop at www.flarestreet.com and @flarestreet.

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As retail becomes more digitally driven, consumers expect immersive, personalised shopping experiences. Rendered Fits specialist Shopify application allows customers to virtually try on garments before purchasing.

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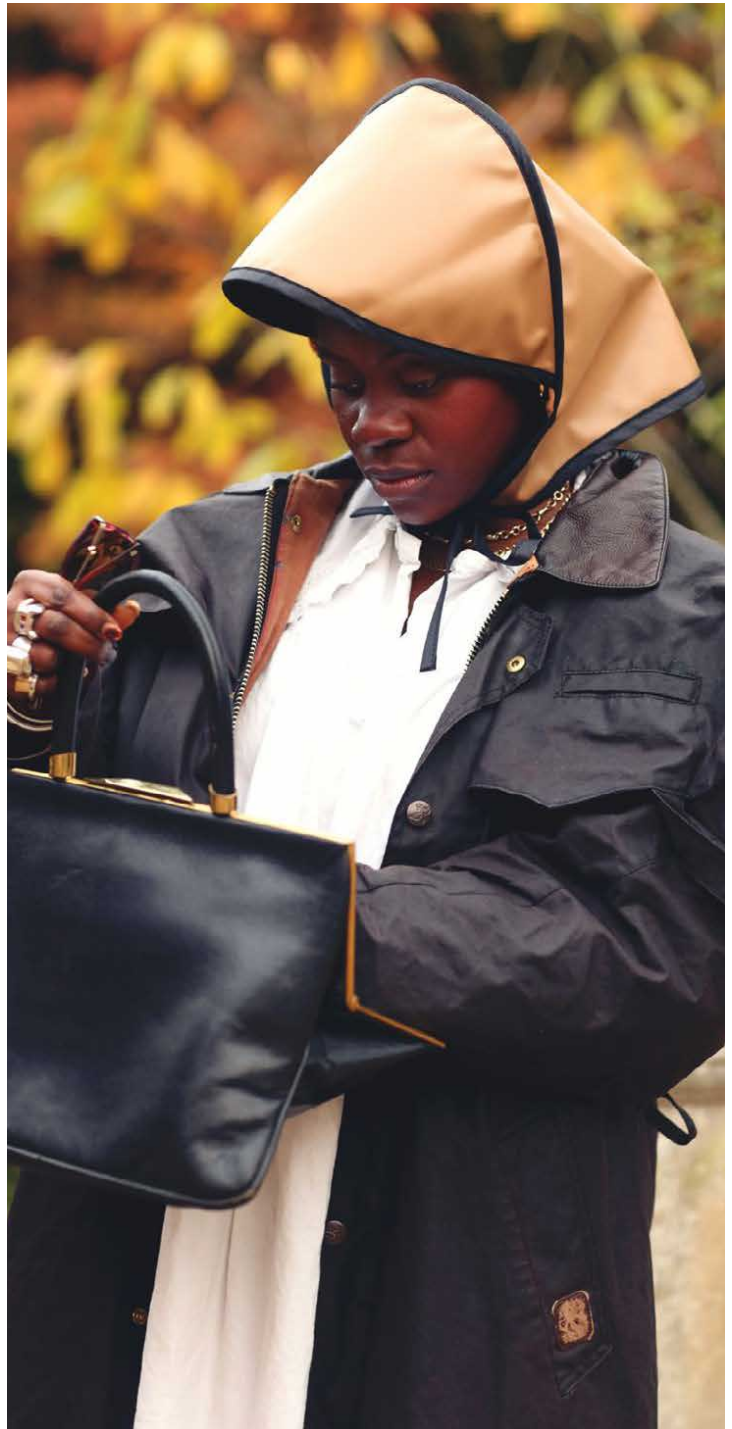


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Gorgeous Stacking Jewellery From Potter & Mooch. Explore the newly launched collection, pictured, inspired by the Mediterranean Sea. Perfect for your travels! Waterproof and hypoallergenic. Stack multiple designs to create your own look. Matching climber earrings (Ear Wings) for a single piercing also available. Prices start from £26. 14ct Yellow Gold Filled or 925 Sterling Silver. Call (+44) 01903 331744 or visit www.potterandmooch.co.uk

THE RETURN OF THE BONNET

Fashion is constantly a rotation of the past and let's be honest, the internet has so many vibrant videos of people going to estate sales and being blown away by the wardrobes of the people from the past, and Grandmamma is no different! We've searched through the archives of the yesteryears and landed on a product that should really be brought back to the forefront...BONNETS! We all know the woes of carrying around a wet umbrella, figuring out where to pop it down when you enter a shop. Having them turn inside out on a blustery day, and don't get me started on negotiating space in one's suitcase for widerbrim hats! But I think the grannies of the past were really onto something with their handy rain/sun bonnets and Grandmamma wants to bring back those good old days. Let's have fun in all sorts of weather again by being unapologetically stylish (and maybe feeling the rain on your skin- just a little bit).



Use the QR code to be a part of the movement or follow us on instagram @ourgrandmamma to follow along with our story and have a sneak peek of new products to come.

Bazaar Fashion

Yellow

PHOTO BY TAYLOR COLGATE AT LA DOLCE VILLA

Bazaar Art



ARTIST of the YEAR SATU METSOLA *Intuition, Meditation, and the Art of Presence*



Satu Metsola
Artist - Finland
IG: satu.metsola

For a long time, Satu Metsola did not paint at all. When she finally returned to drawing, it arrived in a single, uninterrupted surge—hours at a time—reopening a practice she believed she had quietly left behind. That moment marked the beginning of a more measured return to painting: one shaped by patience, discipline, and an unwavering trust in intuition.

Today, Metsola's work is recognised for its soft yet vivid bursts of colour—paintings that seem to carry the fleeting light of a Finnish summer, the landscape of her upbringing. Beneath their luminous surfaces lies a deeper narrative: the story of how she came to understand herself as an artist.

"When I was working as a curator, I collaborated with an artist who encouraged me to draw alongside them," she recalls. "I hadn't picked up a pencil in years. At first, I felt completely blocked—until something opened, and I drew for hours on end."

In her studio, routine takes precedence over spontaneity. "You won't see any action painting here," she says, describing how she often sits with a canvas for long stretches before making a single mark. Meditation is embedded in her daily practice, anchoring her in presence and allowing intuition to lead. "It governs my decisions," she explains. "It guides the movement of my hand—the choices I make that I can't always explain rationally."

That same attentiveness determines when a painting is complete. "I paint for as long as necessary," she says. "The painting tells me when it's finished. I know it's complete when it reveals its name." None of her works remain untitled; if they do, she knows the painting is still unresolved.

Metsola's work is shown at London Fashion Week, where our conversation unfolds.

Is there a recurring concept, emotion, or question that returns in your work?

Satu: My process is long and slow, and everything I experience while painting is carried into the artwork. The paintings are abstract—there's no right or wrong way to experience them. I often work with human emotions: love, loss, and our connections to both inner and outer worlds. I'm interested in the storms of life that exist beneath a calm surface.

How does your curator's eye influence your practice as an artist?

Satu: I'm very aware of current trends, but I paint only what I'm meant to paint—without pressure to perform. Being an artist has given me more understanding than books ever could. Many artists find it easy to work with me because I understand their processes. We speak the same language.

Has there been a recent moment that shifted how you think about making art?

Satu: During an artist residency in the Finnish archipelago, I realised I had set very precise goals for myself and moved away from conscious presence. Letting go of that control changed everything. My work became more open, more free. Accepting incompleteness was essential, and unexpected encounters led me toward entirely new ideas.

Looking ahead, are there new forms you're curious to explore?

Satu: I'm always experimenting. Recently, I presented abstract ceramic sculptures alongside a contemporary dance performance. My latest series combines oil pastel paintings with lyrical text, exploring how voice, language, and image can intertwine.

In the end, Metsola's practice reveals itself as one rooted not in certainty, but in attentiveness. Her work unfolds slowly, shaped by intuition rather than expectation, and guided by a willingness to remain open to the unknown. Across mediums, her approach remains consistent: a quiet commitment to presence, where each mark, gesture, or fragment of text becomes part of an evolving language. Rather than seeking definitive answers, she allows her work to hold space for ambiguity; inviting the viewer to encounter it not as something to be understood, but as something to be felt.

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A person is standing on a rocky, sandy beach under a clear blue sky. They are wearing a long, flowing white dress. Several patterned scarves are draped over the dress, featuring various designs including stripes, floral motifs, and geometric patterns in colors like yellow, blue, and black. The person is barefoot. The Celine Paris logo is overlaid in the center of the image.

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