

BAZAAR

APRIL 2026 £6.99

RACHEL ZEGLER
'I refuse to assimilate for anybody else's comfort'

ON HER MAJESTY'S STYLE SERVICE
The spy who dressed the Queen

SPRING AWAKENING

Fearless florals and rainbow brights to refresh your look









RALPH LAUREN

Dior







LOUIS V

LE MONOGRAM, TRANSCENDING

Le Speedy - 1930

A woman with dark, curly hair is reclining on a brown leather sofa. She is wearing a black, vertically pinstriped halter-neck top with a white trim along the neckline. She has a gold ring on her left hand and a gold necklace with a rectangular pendant. In the foreground, a Louis Vuitton bag with the iconic monogram pattern and brown leather handles is visible. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

VUITTON

ING GENERATIONS SINCE 1896





GIORGIO ARMANI

VITTORIA CERETTI





GIORGIO ARMANI

VITTORIA CERETTI





CHANEL

HUNTER SCHAFER BY ANNE COLLIER

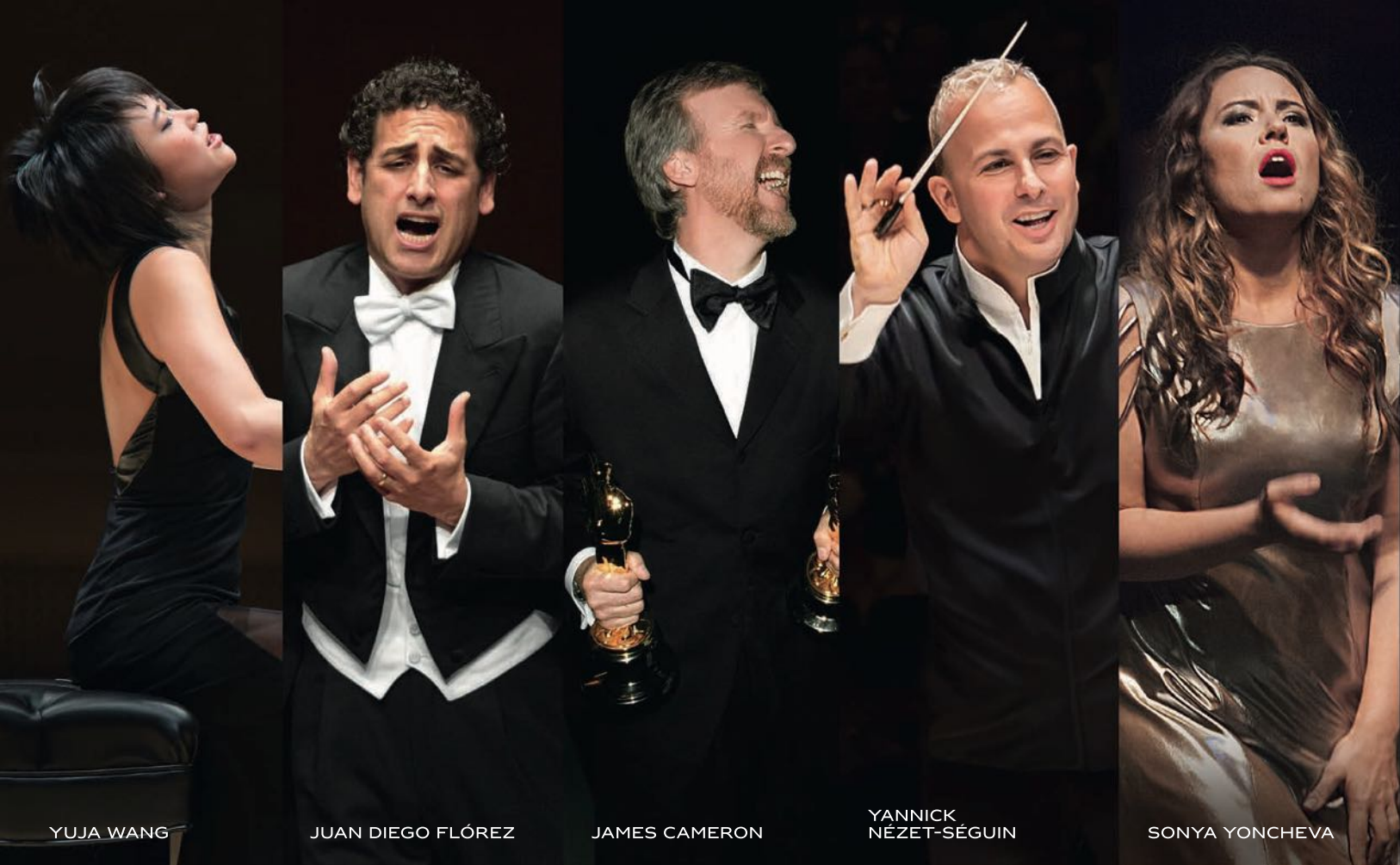
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Cartier



YUJA WANG

JUAN DIEGO FLÓREZ

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REACH FOR THE CROWN



SUPPORTING THE ARTS SINCE 1976



MARTIN SCORSESE

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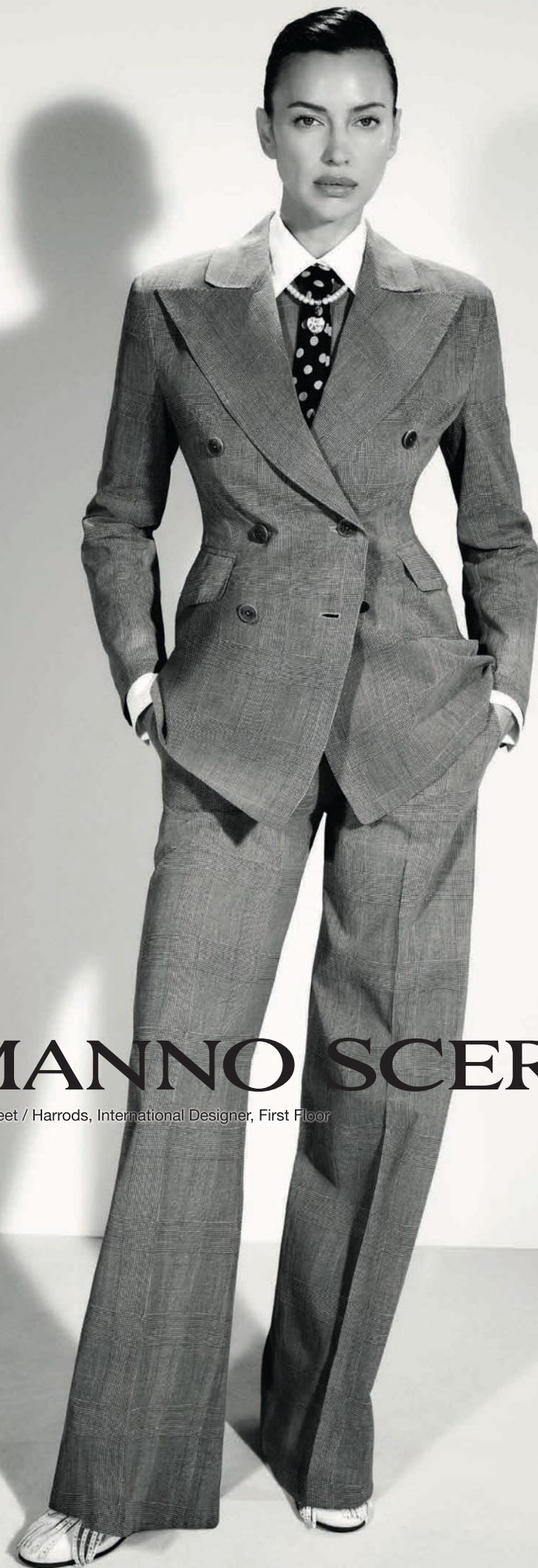


THE DAY-DATE



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HardWear by Tiffany

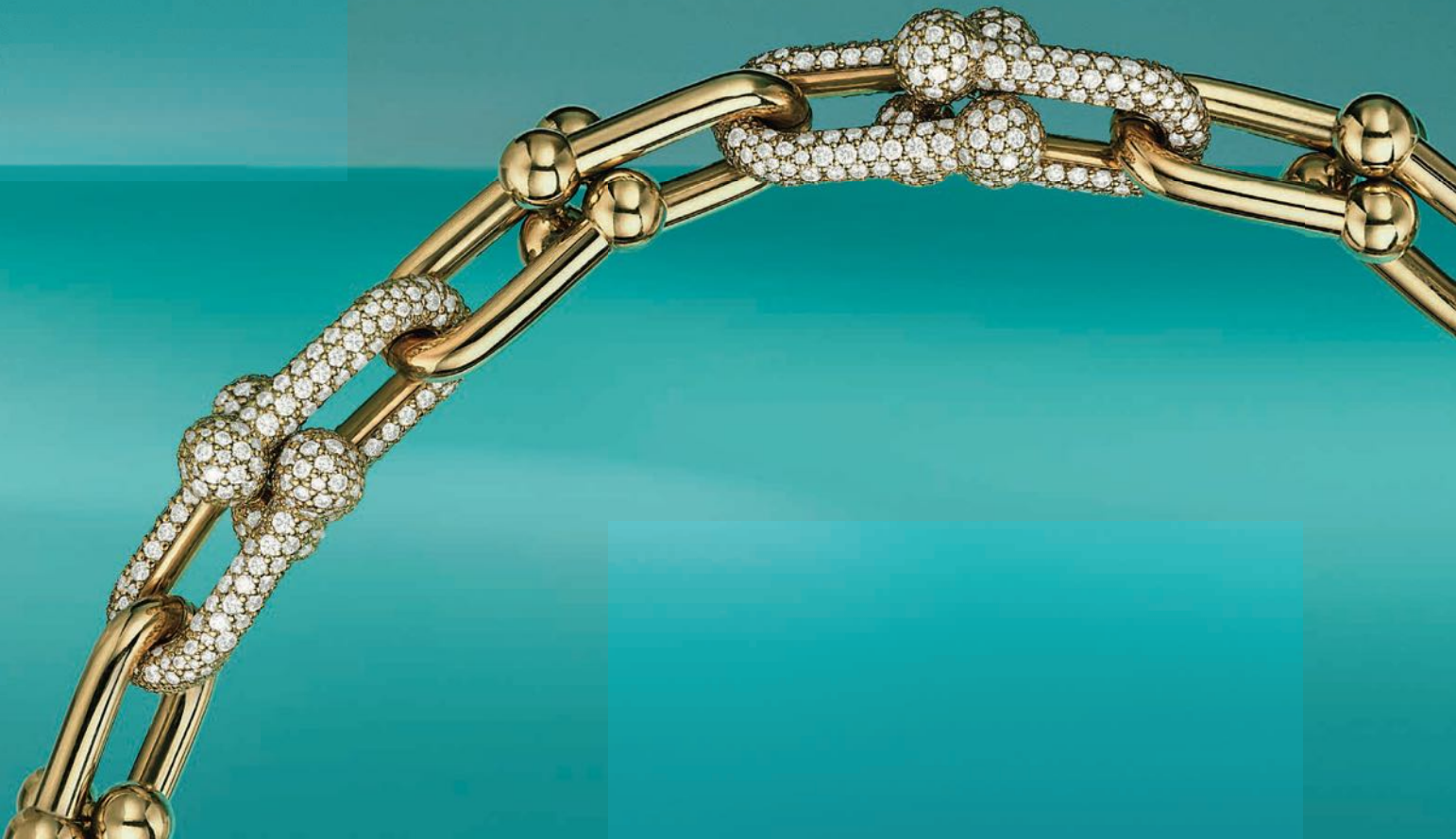


HardWear by Tiffany

A design from 1962 inspired
by New York, a city in flux.

An expression of love's
transformative strength.

With love, Since 1837 **TIFFANY & CO.**



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Roos Abels wears Ferragamo and Stephen Jones Millinery in 'The bright stuff'

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COVER LOOK Rachel Zegler wears organza dress, £1,395, Simone Rocha. Platinum, gold and diamond earrings; matching necklace, both from a selection, Tiffany & Co. Styled by Miranda Almond. Hair by Ward Stegerhoek at Home Agency. Make-up by Francelle Daly at Bryant Artists. Manicure by Mo Qin at the Wall Group. Photograph by Alexi Lubomirski



PHOTOGRAPH: ERIK MADIGANHECK

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Shabby chic is back and more alluring than ever. Plus: terracotta tones, bespoke bread, disguised desserts and wondrous whiskies
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Add a sprig of floral flavour to your homeware this spring



chains and tides
Hermès, crossing horizons



HERMÈS
PARIS

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Rachel Zegler wears McQueen and Tiffany & Co on this month's cover shoot

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- 210 **WHY DON'T YOU...** jump down the rabbit hole in Easter Bunny heels?

PHOTOGRAPH: ALEXI LUBOMIRSKI. RACHEL ZEGLER WEARS JACQUARD WAISTCOAT, £1,190; DENIM SHORTS (JUST SEEN); FROM A SELECTION, BOTH McQUEEN. WHITE GOLD AND DIAMOND EARRINGS, £7,700; TIFFANY & CO. SEE MAIN STORY FOR DETAILS

A woman with short, dark, wavy hair is walking outdoors on a gravel path. She is wearing a long, flowing purple dress with large white polka dots. The dress has a sheer, mesh-like overlay with more polka dots. She is looking back over her shoulder towards the camera. The background consists of dense green foliage and trees, with sunlight filtering through. The overall mood is elegant and natural.

MARINA
RINALDI

Editor's letter

APRIL 2026

T

here's an interesting article in this month's At Work section (from page 75) on how to tackle procrastination. According to the writer, we put things off not because we're lazy but because the emotions around the task are overwhelming. I found myself agreeing heartily as I finally sat down on the Sunday night before we went to press to write my editor's letter. It always feels an impossible challenge to sum up a whole issue in a few pithy words; to describe in a sentence or two a story that may have been months in the making. One such fascinating piece is 'Operation Majesty' (page 170). A century after the birth of our late Queen, Justine Picardie analyses the diplomatic impact of her wardrobe choices – to be displayed in a new exhibition at the King's Gallery – and reveals how one of her favourite couturiers was also a secret spy. Meanwhile, for a modern take on power dressing, turn to page 116 for three uplifting fashion shoots. Finally, whatever the weather outside (at the time of writing, it seems to have rained every single day of 2026), spring is blooming inside the issue, with flowers appearing everywhere from our Living pages, featuring the gloriously sprigged manor belonging to the originator of 'shabby chic', to the Beauty section, where we have curated the loveliest scents in the world. Not forgetting our vibrant cover shoot with the talented Rachel Zegler, who is back on these shores for another stint in London's West End. If you can't catch her on Primrose Hill with her goldendoodle Lenny, I invite you to meet her on page 100.



Rachel Zegler wears Simone Rocha and Tiffany & Co (page 100)



LYDIA SLATER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

THIS MONTH, I ENJOYED...

- Partying with Privé (harpersbazaar.com/uk/prime)
- Seeing Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* (oldvictheatre.com)
- Trying a bracing cryotherapy session (vidavii.com)

£4,900, Fendi

£11,800, Van Cleef & Arpels

£6,300, Fendi

£765, Manolo Blahnik

From a selection, Omega

EDITOR'S CHOICES

Florals for spring can be groundbreaking. Look no further than Fendi, then add elevated accessories.

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Lucky Spring
Between the Finger Ring



Van Cleef & Arpels

Haute Joaillerie, place Vendôme since 1906



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vancleefarpels.com



PAGE 100

RACHEL ZEGLER

Our cover star rose to fame in 2021 as Maria in Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story*, for which she won a Golden Globe. Since then, she has starred in the live-action film *Snow White* and performed the lead role in *Romeo + Juliet* on Broadway. For Free Magazines Check Soft.ac After a stellar

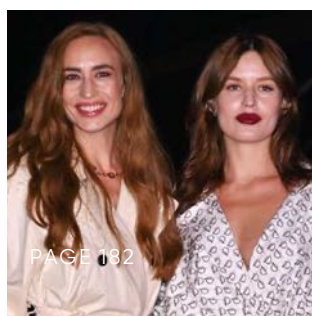
turn last year as Eva Perón in *Evita*, she returns to the London Palladium for an anniversary-concert run of *The Last Five Years*, which she discusses in 'Force of nature.'

A song that brings you joy "'Lady Lady" by Olivia Dean. She makes even the most painful emotions sound pretty.'

Your favourite indulgence 'Baking. I made pumpkin chocolate muffins this week.'

A springtime activity you love 'A dog walk in Primrose Hill with my goldendoodle Lenny.'

An unforgettable performance 'Audra McDonald in *Gypsy* on Broadway in 2024. I went when the review embargo lifted for *Snow White* and I just needed to be anywhere other than on my phone...'



PAGE 132

LIZZY AND GEORGIA MAY JAGGER

The Jagger sisters have modelled for labels including Vivienne Westwood and Burberry, as well as variously pursuing passions in design and film production.

Now ambassadors for Jo Malone London, they talk about the scents that mean the most to them, and the power of sisterhood, on our beauty pages.

A song that brings you joy LJ: 'Aretha Franklin's "What a Diff'rence a Day Made".'

Your favourite indulgence GMJ: 'A glass of red wine.'

A springtime activity you love LJ: 'Lying in the grass under a tree.'

MAGGIE ADERIN

'Reach for the stars, no matter what your stars are,' says the space scientist and Bafta-nominated presenter Maggie Aderin. Her recent memoir *Starchild* recounts her path to her dream career, which she discusses in At Work.

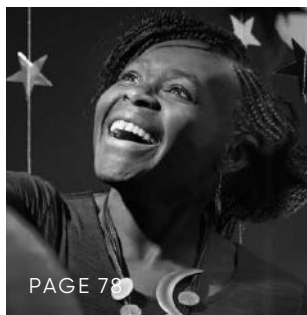
A song that brings you joy "'Scarlet Ribbons" by Harry Belafonte. My mother played it for me when I was a child.'

Your favourite indulgence 'Korean dramas. They take me out of my busy ADHD brain.'

A springtime activity you love 'Looking up at the night sky to see the constellations and if there are any meteor showers. I find it grounding.'

Your signature dish 'Jollof rice.'

An unforgettable performance 'I saw a wonderful science communicator's talk about the importance of flies in the ecosystem. I left seeing them in a whole new light.'



PAGE 78



PAGE 86

ANNETTE BENING

Over her four-decade career, the actress has been nominated for five Academy Awards for her roles in

blockbusters including *American Beauty*, *The Kids Are All Right* and *The Grifters*.

As she steps into the role of Dr Euphronius in Maggie Gyllenhaal's 2026 film *The Bride!*, which reimagines the story of *Frankenstein*, she reflects on playing nuanced characters.

A song that brings you joy "'I Have Confidence" from *The Sound of Music*. I was obsessed with the musical as a kid.'

Your favourite indulgence 'Milk chocolate with nuts.'

An unforgettable performance 'Bruce Springsteen in the show about his life; he's alone on stage, playing the guitar and piano. That was one of those magical moments.'





LADY
PREMIER



B
BREITLING
1884



Model shown: 26MY Range Rover Sport with optional features. Official Fuel Economy Figures for the Range Rover Sport 26MY (combined) in kWh/100 miles (kilometres) 45.7-48.9 (28.4 - 30.4). CO₂ Emissions (weighted combined) in g/km: 17 - 20. Equivalent all-PHEV in mpg (l/100km): Combined 39.4-36.1 (7.2-7.8). WLTP CO₂ Emissions 188-205 g/km. The figures provided are as a result of figures may differ. CO₂, fuel economy, energy consumption and range figures may vary according to factors such as driving styles,

RANGE ROVER SPORT



Plug-In Electric Hybrid range in mpg (l/100km) (weighted combined): 385.6-328.8 (0.8-0.9). Electric energy consumption (weighted electric range in miles (kilometres): Up to 73.9 (119). Official Fuel Economy Figures for the Range Rover Sport 26MY range (excluding official manufacturer's tests in accordance with EU legislation with a fully charged battery. For comparison purposes only. Real world environmental conditions, load, wheel fitment, accessories fitted, actual route and battery condition.



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HERNO

BAZAAR

style

EDITED BY
AVRIL MAIR

1

PERMANENT COLLECTION

The wardrobe staples to have on rotation? A little black jacket, some cosy cashmere and – of course – the perfect pair of jeans.

Jeans, £1,955; tweed jacket, £5,865; cashmere jumper, £2,510; grosgrain and leather Mary Janes, £980, all Chanel.

White gold and diamond earrings (far left), £5,800; matching earrings, £6,000; matching ring, £11,000, all Coco Crush by Chanel Fine Jewellery



10 things we love

Denim, denim and more denim: fresh ways to wear the fabric that never goes out of style

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THERESA MARX STYLED BY HOLLY GORST



3

WORK IT OUT

Who says denim can't be smart? Bootleg jeans teamed with a perennially stylish white shirt and oversize blazer make the perfect office outfit.

Jeans, £790; wool jacket, from a selection; cotton shirt, from a selection; silk twill scarf, £440, all Celine

2

BUCKLE UP

Channel a Nineties mood and opt for a chunky gold belt (preferably Celine's) to add structure to your silhouette.

Leather belt, £790, Celine



MIX IT UP

Not ready to commit to a spring/summer wardrobe? Master transitional dressing Balenciaga-style: by pairing mid-length shorts and a cocooning jacket with bare legs and sandals.

Denim shorts, £1,250; leather jacket, £5,290; velvet sandals, £625, all Balenciaga. Leather bag, about £645, Francesco Biasia

5

WHITE TIE

Sarah Burton puts a (literal) twist on a classic with her latest design for Givenchy, best worn with a pair of sparkling hoop earrings.

Nappa shirt, £4,345, Givenchy by Sarah Burton. Platinum and diamond earrings, from a selection, Boodles

6

CUFFING SEASON

The new way to wear jeans? Just skimming the floor, with a high waist and turned-up hemlines. Go indigo for bonus style points.

Jeans, £1,086, Givenchy by Sarah Burton



COME UNDONE

Embody effortless chic in Victoria Beckham's double-duty shirt-jacket, thrown casually over a plain tank dress. You woke up like this...

Denim shirt-jacket, £990; cotton tank dress (made for the catwalk), both Victoria Beckham. Rose gold and diamond earrings, £8,050, Pomellato. Satin mules, £820, Ferragamo



OFFICE RESTRUCTURE

Refresh your workplace style in a high-collared cropped jacket combined with an artfully cut denim skirt.

Denim skirt, £840; wool jacket, £2,180; leather belt, £830, all Khaite. White gold and diamond earrings, from a selection, Chaumet

9

A CUT ABOVE

This angular take on the military jacket is a must for fashionable shape-shifters.

Wool coat, from a selection, Dior. Platinum and diamond earrings, from a selection, Boodles



BLURRED LINES

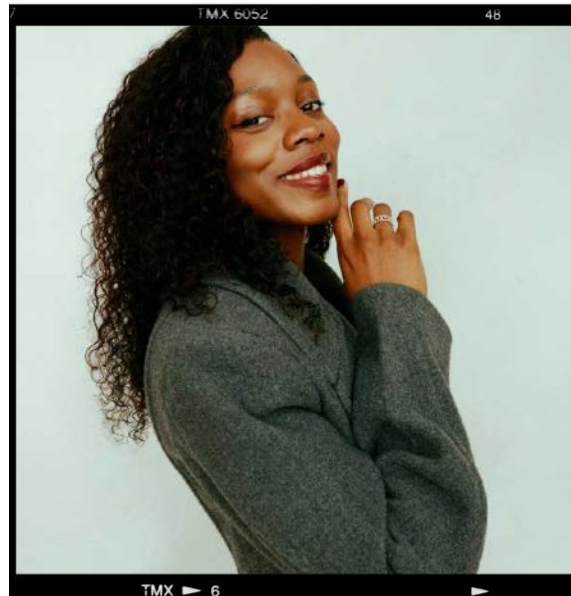
Are they jeans or a skirt? Defy sartorial genres in Dior's super-wide-leg denim.

Jeans, £1,700; leather Derby shoes, £1,150, both Dior

STYLE FILE

NIA DACOSTA

The American writer and director on Gucci earrings, antique lighters and the joy of a chocolate cookie



My best fashion investment is... the 2005 Dior by Galliano red-velvet coat that I bought for an event. It was perfect for what I needed and I keep finding new ways to wear it.

The item in my wardrobe that I couldn't live without is... one particular pair of oversize Wranglers. They're comfy but also can be dressed up or down with the right shoe or top.

The piece of jewellery that means the most is... my Gucci earrings from the days of Tom Ford. I don't get jewellery as a gift often, but I really take pleasure in buying it for myself.

The last thing I bought and loved was... a Yohji Yamamoto two-piece from his 1994 collection.

The brands that best represent my style... I always have a serious problem when I walk into Alaïa or JW Anderson. Especially JW Anderson, as it's very close to my accountant's office.

My most-used beauty product is... any kind of good felt-tip eyeliner. And Chanel's gold shimmery lip gloss – I use it on my eyelids.

If I had five minutes to get ready, I'd throw on... a great dress and my Phoebe Philo boots that make everything look better.

My death-row meal is... Just leave me in Core by Clare Smyth and walk away.

The greatest style advice I ever received was... 'Do you. But be brave.'

On my bedside table are... the three books I'm telling myself I'm going to read (or reread, as is the case with Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin*). *Rosemary's Baby* by Ira Levin has just been added to the pile. I also have a water glass and decanter, a candle I never light and rings I've forgotten to take off before getting into bed.

The rule I live by is... be curious.

My signature scents are... Super Cedar for daytime and Tobacco Mandarin for evening, both by Byredo.

My favourite memory with my family is... Thanksgiving, when all the aunts and uncles and cousins are there.

My favourite work of art... always changes, but I was recently in Madrid for work and revisited one of my favourite rooms in the Reina Sofia Museum. There, I reconnected with my love of the work of Angeles Santos. *Tertulia* and *Un Mundo* are both holding space in my head at the moment.

The place that means most to me is... home: wherever that is, whoever that is.

The indulgence I can't live without is... a very, very excellent chocolate cookie.

At my dream dinner party, I would serve... a rolled saddle of lamb using the Balthazar recipe. Never disappoints.

And I'd invite... When I can manage it, I like to curate a group of six people I think should meet or who haven't seen each other in a while, or who come from a part of my life I want to spend some more time in. But usually, I forget who I've invited and I'm manically making food for 20 people.

I have a collection of... antique lighters. I don't smoke, but I guess I love playing with fire.

My go-to karaoke song is... 'Sunny Afternoon' by the Kinks.

If I could be prime minister for a day, I would... ban gambling ads, fix the tax system, make buses free, rejoin the EU.

ASK AVRIL

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

I'm hosting my 40th-birthday party in a gastropub. What on Earth do I wear?

Obviously you need to be the star of this show, but it's not the time and place for a ballgown. I'm a big fan of trousers and a nice top, particularly in a crowded setting where you're likely to be seen mostly from the waist up, and my go-to look for a cocktail dress code is exactly this. A caveat: the top half needs to be really, really extra – I often opt for an embellished mini dress over jeans, the kind of thing I wouldn't wear on its own. This sequined Simone Rocha number is belle-of-the-ball stuff.



£2,095, Burberry



ROKSANDA

Now my daughter is at school, I've had to up the style ante to compete with the other west-London mums. Any ideas on how to beat them at their own game?

Rosie Huntington-Whiteley is an absolute master of casual fabulousity, and her Instagram account offers a rich seam of style inspo. The general idea should be polished but not trying too hard: a Burberry mac over tonal athleisure, hair in a messy bun, minimal make-up. Trainers are allowed; pyjamas are certainly not.



£3,450, Dior

I'm going to a women's-networking dinner – what shall I wear?

A female designer, of course! London has the best: see Roksanda (artistic drama), Simone Rocha (edgy romance), Victoria Beckham (streamlined elegance), Emilia Wickstead (modern formalwear), Tove (strength and beauty) and Edeline Lee, whose dresses are firm *Bazaar* team favourites.



£975, Simone Rocha at Mytheresa

My husband has booked a weekend at Gleneagles, which sounds idyllic – but country dressing is outside my wardrobe comfort zone. What to pack?

Eiesha Bharti Pasricha, who is the artistic director of both Gleneagles and Estelle Manor, has poured much of her own personal style into the Scottish hotel, which is a glorious mix of heritage and modernity. Fortunately for everyone else, she has also opened an arcade of chic stores on its ground floor where you can buy all the tweed



Coco Chanel with the Duke of Westminster in 1924



£1,890, Edeline Lee

and cashmere you desire. Your muse should be Coco Chanel in her Highlands era.

What single thing can I buy to refresh my wardrobe for spring/summer?

The easiest way to update is always with accessories: a change of shoe or bag can enliven your collection. Don't be boring, though. You want something that doesn't match anything, so it goes with everything (this theory is a bit like leopard being a neutral). An unexpected colour pop is good, though not for monochrome minimalists like me. Instead, I'm saving very, very hard for Chanel's shiny silver flap bag, which should be mine by 2028. I also love JW Anderson's silver Bow bag for Dior.

Fashion dilemma? Email your questions to askavril@harpersbazaar.co.uk.



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BAZAAR

jewellery

EDITED BY
AVRIEL MAIR

All prices throughout,
from a selection, except
where stated. Rose gold
and diamond watch (left),
CHOPARD. Gold watch,
£13,200, CHANEL

Spring forward

Embrace the changing of the seasons with timepieces in an earthy palette of browns and golds

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PLUSIA ROMPOGTANNAKI STYLED BY HOLLY GORST



Stainless steel and white gold watch (top), £12,800, ROLEX. Pink gold watch, VACHERON CONSTANTIN

Stainless steel and
pink gold watch,
AUDEMARS PIGUET



JEWELLERY



Stainless steel and quartz watch (top), £1,600, LONGINES.
Stainless steel watch, £1,050, RADO



SILK AND CASHMERE DRESS, E6120, GABRIELA HEARST

Rose gold and diamond watch (left), PIAGET. Red and brown gold watch, BLANCPAIN

Red gold watch
(top), £13,300,
BREITLING. Yellow
gold watch, IWC
SCHAFFHAUSEN





THIS PAGE: COTTON CREPE TOP, ABOUT £510, COTTON AND SILK SHORTS, ABOUT £655, BOTH FFORME. OPPOSITE: COTTON TOP, £625, TOVE

White gold
and diamond
watch, CARTIER

JEWELLERY

Stainless steel,
diamond and
opaline watch,
£7,500, BULGARI



LEATHER DRESS, £4,895, FERRAGAMO. HAIR BY CHLOE FRIEDA, USING ORIBE. MAKE-UP BY JINNY KIM, USING YSL BEAUTY. MANICURE BY AMI STREETS, USING KURE BAZAAR. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: ISABELLA MAGEE. MODEL: AISHWARYA GUPTA AT THE HIVE MANAGEMENT. SET DESIGN: CLARA MEITNER

Gold and
steel watch,
£9,900, OMEGA





Chains, medallions, all from a selection, Van Cleef & Arpels Zodiac collection

Signs of the times

With the global astrology-app market expected to reach more than £6 billion by 2030, it's no surprise that planetary jewellery is in the ascendant. Inspired by the night sky and steeped in nearly a century of poetic heritage, Van Cleef & Arpels' dazzling Zodiac collection revisits the Parisian house's fascination with astronomy, which started in the 1950s with a series of star-sign necklaces and was expanded during the 1970s. Now, a new release of celestial charms introduces 12 yellow gold bracelets, as well as white gold necklaces for the first time, all ornamented with medallions representing the Western zodiac symbols. **AVRIL MAIR**

Golden threads

Coco Crush fine jewellery first launched in 2015, inspired by Chanel's matelassé motif – an emblem of the house since 1955. This graphic design was taken from the iconic 2.55 bag, which itself was modelled on the quilting on Gabrielle Chanel's suede sofa in her Rue Cambon apartment. Now, a decade after its launch, the collection is refreshed with playful, supple pieces designed to be stacked and layered, offered in the maison's signature beige gold, as well as yellow gold and white gold with diamonds. The new necklaces are particularly special; adjustable in length and flexible – a technique that took three years to perfect – they feel like wearing a ribbon around your neck. AM

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF CHANEL

All necklaces, from a selection, Chanel Fine Jewellery Coco Crush collection

Scene stealers

Back in 1953, Marilyn Monroe's 'Talk to me, Harry Winston' line in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* told the world that diamonds were a girl's best friend – and established the New York house as the best place to find them. That famous phrase is now the name of a new one-of-a-kind collection confirming the brand's authority, a story told in three glittering chapters: King of Diamonds, Rare Jeweler of the World and Jeweler to the Stars. Incredible gemstones, unparalleled craftsmanship and glamour beyond compare are, of course, the themes. AM

Necklace, brooch, earrings, all from a selection, Harry Winston Talk To Me, Harry Winston collection

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BAZAAR

accessories

EDITED BY
AVRIL MAIR

£6,800, Fendi

Treasure-trove

From subtle sequins to full-scale sparkle, glittering embellishments are the key to unlocking new-season style

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL ZAK STYLED BY HADYA TUOFIQ

ACCESSORIES





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heels with shimmering diamanté details



ACCESSORIES



£1,890, Prada

Bag charm, £520, Louis Vuitton

Bracelet, £99, Swarovski

£190, Michael Kors

£385, Tory Burch

£275, Isabel Marant at Mytheresa

£185, Oséree

Hair bow, £445, Roger Vivier

£1,250, Dolce & Gabbana

Brooch, £1,050, Chanel

£1,220, Gucci

£1,135, Manolo Blahnik

£2,390, Valentino Garavani

Necklace, £2,594, Givenchy by Sarah Burton

Hair claw, £395, Balenciaga

Necklace, £820, Miu Miu

£772, Swarovski

£1,750, Gucci

Hat, £610, Rabanne

£1,150, Giorgio Armani

From a selection, Hermès

Hair clip, £470, Prada at Selfridges

£372, Amina Muaddi

Hair clip, £320, Valentino Garavani



£4,700, Louis Vuitton

Rare gem

Louis Vuitton's precious, jewel-encrusted clutch makes a scintillating companion for your soirée

ACCESSORIES



£255, Max Mara



From a selection, Celine



£360, Jennifer Behr at Net-a-Porter



£590, Dior

Hair bow, £435, Gucci



£975, Sophie Buhai



£225, Zimmermann



£1,530, Judith Leiber Couture



£570, Manolo Blahnik

Scarf, £750, Dries Van Noten



£495, Loewe

Necklace, £655, Louis Vuitton



£1,650, Dolce & Gabbana



Bangle, £890, Chloé



£1,090, Aquazzura

£1,230, Rabanne at Mytheresa



£425, Self-Portrait



£465, Ralph Lauren



£550, Valentino Garavani



£265, Fendi



£1,180, Ferragamo

Necklace, £2,200, Chanel



£695, Simone Rocha



£1,095, Christian Louboutin

Hair clip, £370, Prada



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Didier Mariotti, Cellar Master

BAZAAR

at work

EDITED BY
BROOKE THEIS

Nota bene

Work smarter with practical advice from the productivity expert Lily Silverton. Plus: the space scientist Maggie Aderin on the power of dreaming big; and desk-top tech to turbocharge your efficiency

Sasha (left) wears suede jacket, £5,200; poplin shirt, £900; mohair trousers, £1,290; leather belt, £720, all Miu Miu. Silver earrings, £470, Tom Wood. Leather diary, £100, Smythson. Cheng wears mohair jacket, £2,350; matching skirt, £1,290; silk jacket (worn underneath), £3,400, all Fendi. Leather diary, £260, Smythson

PHOTOGRAPH: SILVIA DRAZ. STYLED BY GRACE CLARKE. HAIR BY LEWIS STANFORD AT EIGHTEEN MANAGEMENT. USING LOREAL PROFESSIONNEL TECHNIART. MAKE-UP BY FOIN WHELAN. USING BY TERRY. MANICURE BY HAYLEY EVANS-SMITH. USING ESSIE. STYLISTS ASSISTANT: OLIVIA SANDFORD-WILSON. MODELS: SASHA DOM AT LINDEN STAUB TALENT AGENCY, AND CHENG XING AT ELITE MODEL MANAGEMENT



IN THE ZONE

The writer and mindset coach *Lily Silverton* shares her approach to boosting productivity at work

In a world filled with constant pressures, opportunities and expectations, productivity has come to mean one thing: doing more, faster. It's an approach that can easily become counter-productive; if everything is a priority, nothing is.

The UK's macroeconomic backdrop isn't exactly conducive to efficiency. The flexible work-from-home arrangements of the pandemic have largely disappeared, as businesses increasingly demand that their employees return to the office and work longer hours. Yet, as studies show, since 2008 overall productivity has fallen year on year (with the exception of a brief pandemic-related surge in 2021). Clearly, something isn't working.

I wrote my book *Prioritise This* to try to bring some order to the chaos of life. One aspect was offering an alternative to the overly simplified messaging we're constantly exposed to. Ultimately, productivity isn't about volume or speed. It doesn't involve waking

up at five in the morning or sacrificing your personal life. It's about knowing what's important to you and prioritising that. It requires shifting the question from 'How can I do more?' to 'How can I do what matters, first?' Here are my suggestions.

RETHINK YOUR PRIORITIES

Overcoming procrastination and improving productivity are frequently mentioned in the same breath. What's far less acknowledged, however, is that being proactive is as much about managing emotions as it is about managing time.

What's often (self-)labelled as 'laziness' or a lack of focus is usually avoidance. We put off tasks because they feel heavy, intimidating or uncomfortable. The idea of doing them – or of not doing them well – can leave us feeling anxious. So, instead, we find something (anything!) else to turn our attention to. Yet, as we all know,

delaying important tasks creates more stress and pressure later on.

Recognising avoidance as an attempt at temporary emotional relief can be helpful in reframing your problem. Thinking ‘This is an emotional reaction rather than a time-management problem’ can interrupt the pattern and create space for a different response.

Priorities also play a crucial role. The more confident you are about what is (and is not) truly important, the less overwhelmed you’ll feel and the easier it becomes to move projects forward. The constant internal negotiations about what should be done first quieten once you have clarity on what matters most.

BREAK THE CYCLE

Bad habits at work rarely appear in a day. They develop gradually as coping responses to difficult environments. Saying ‘yes’ straight away, constant email-checking, over-preparing, staying permanently available – these behaviours usually begin as attempts to feel capable, qualified and good at our jobs.

The problem is that these habits don’t fall away on their own. Over-preparing may have initially helped manage uncertainty in a new role, but it drains energy and time. In these situations, productivity suffers not because we’re doing too little, but because we’re doing too much.

Breaking unhelpful patterns starts with awareness. For Free Magazines Check Soft.ac Ask yourself: ‘What do I do regularly that no longer works for me?’ Then, choose just one habit to address – if you always automatically say ‘yes’, begin by saying ‘maybe’. Make the change manageable, observe the impact and build from there. Often, the most useful change isn’t adding a new system but letting go of an old one.

LEARN FROM REJECTION

Rejection is an inevitable part of working life, but it still stings and can easily make us lose momentum. A missed promotion, a declined pitch, a critical email – it knocks us off course far more than we expect.

One way to protect yourself after a setback is by asking the question: ‘Does this change what matters to me?’ The answer is key. If something truly matters, then rejection isn’t a sign to give up but an indication that you should find another route.

We’re more productive when we don’t let rejection feel personal or allow it to derail our confidence. It’s important to remind ourselves that it has less to do with us than we assume; there are usually other factors at play. Plus, when we’re sure of our priorities, we’re less likely to internalise or be destabilised by rejection – it stops

seeming like a statement about our worth and becomes useful information or feedback instead.

BE YOUR OWN YARDSTICK

Comparison may not be the first thing that springs to mind when we think about productivity, but consider how draining it can be if you’re constantly charting your own inadequacies.

In workplace cultures (and on social media), where we’re exposed to other people’s achievements, comparison is almost unavoidable. Rather than trying to eliminate it entirely, use it to your advantage. Instead of letting it undermine your confidence or distort your sense of progress, treat the feeling as information. Ask yourself: ‘What is it about this person’s life or achievements that I’m drawn to?’

Be mindful not to measure your pace or success against someone else’s without asking whether you’d actually want their entire life – not just the highlights. Then ask whether you’d be willing to trade your own experiences, too. Often, the answer is no. Comparison fragments attention and dampens creativity by pulling focus outwards. Don’t try to win someone else’s race; direct energy towards your own.

EAT THE FROG

A good next step is to ‘eat the frog’. A trusted method from the professional-development coach Brian Tracy, it states that if you have to do something difficult or intimidating, it’s best to do it first – before your willpower disappears.

The name references a Mark Twain quote: ‘If it’s your job to eat a frog, it’s best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it’s your job to eat two frogs, it’s best to eat the biggest one first.’ Your frog might be preparing for a presentation or an important conversation; whatever it is, do it first, so that you aren’t fretting about it all day.

Productivity isn’t static. It shifts as our priorities, circumstances and commitments change. When it’s aligned with what’s important to you, work is more sustainable and less exhausting. The aim isn’t to do everything perfectly. It’s to do what you can with intention and compassion.

UNBALANCED EQUATION

The statistics show something isn’t adding up...

47%

The proportion of people who admit to procrastinating regularly

1/3

How much of our time we spend on performative tasks

£80bn

How much money poor productivity costs the UK economy each year

26%

The percentage by which productivity has fallen since 2008



‘Prioritise This: A Practical Guide for Thriving in a World That Won’t Slow Down’ by Lily Silverton (£20, John Murray One) is published on 26 March. □



HOW TO...

REACH FOR THE STARS

The space scientist Maggie Aderin explains the importance of grand ambitions

BY BROOKE THEIS

MAGGIE ADERIN CAN'T REMEMBER A TIME WHEN SHE WASN'T fascinated by outer space. Born a year before the Apollo 11 Moon landing of 1969, she grew up in a world in which space exploration was a hot topic. 'As a child, I had the expectation that I would go there as well,' she says – a goal she maintains today.

In the meantime, she has achieved a stellar amount on Earth. One of the UK's most influential scientists, she has engineered instruments for major space missions – including the James Webb Space Telescope, which is used to study galaxy formation, and the climate-monitoring satellite Aeolus, created to help predict natural disasters – while transforming public engagement with astronomy as a Bafta-nominated co-presenter of the BBC's *The Sky at Night*. She served as the president of the British Science Association from 2021 to 2022, became chancellor of the University of Leicester in 2023 and was honoured with a damehood in 2024 – a testament not only to her technical achievements, but also to her lasting impact in making science more inclusive, visible and exciting for all.

'I've spoken to 650,000 people [at schools and events] in the past 21 years or so, many of whom are kids,' she says. 'I say, "Reach for the stars, no matter what your stars are." Sometimes it feels nebulous and so distant that you're not sure you will ever actually reach it. But just having that dream enables you to overcome hurdles.'

In her new memoir *Starchild*, Aderin details the numerous barriers she has faced throughout her career, from being the only Black woman on her physics course at Imperial College London to being one of just two women on a team of 120 at a Ministry of Defence research agency. 'You can feel very



Clockwise from above: Maggie Aderin at the Bafta TV Craft Awards in 2016. At college. As a child



self-conscious as the only one there – you feel you have to try harder and make your contributions significant,' she says. 'We should flip that on its head and say, "No, they need us here, they need our perspective, because otherwise they're all thinking the same way." We need diversity – of thoughts, of people – to come together to find solutions.'

Success, she says, is not about keeping a flawless record, but rather about persevering through difficulty. 'We all have pitfalls in our lives and things that go wrong. What matters is finding the resilience to keep on going. I'm in my late fifties now, and I haven't been to space, but simply having that desire means I've been able to do far more than I ever thought I could.'

Now, more than 50 years since humans were last on the Moon, Nasa is planning another lunar landing – a possibility that has reinforced Aderin's dream of space travel, albeit only once she has finished her work here on Earth. 'My retirement plan is to go to Mars on a one-way trip,' she says. 'Some people potter around the garden; I want to potter around the Martian surface, looking for signs of life.'

'Starchild: My Life Under the Night Sky' by Maggie Aderin (£22, Ebury) is out now. □

ONLY CONNECT

Top team-building destinations



FALLOW HOUSE

This resplendent new events space at Estelle Manor near Oxford comprises a private dining-room and a vast hall – ideal for a grand away day. estellemanor.com



U9 KARAOKE

What could be more bonding than belting out Abba hits with your co-workers? Elevate the experience at U9's luxury karaoke rooms in central London. u9-london.com



THE COLLECTIVE

This female-founded organisation hosts wellness retreats in beautiful locations around the world that connect and inspire women in business. welcometothecollective.co.uk



HOW I GOT HERE

JOANNA GOSLING

The former BBC news anchor retrained as a mediator and now practises at the law firm Irwin Mitchell

What was your first job? 'Fox FM in Oxfordshire took me on as a trainee in the newsroom. From the beginning, I was out interviewing, doing reports and on air.'

What were your duties as a broadcaster? 'You're the person who keeps things steady, communicating the facts, not straying into speculation. It's about holding people's hands through an unfolding situation.'

What challenges did you face as a news anchor? 'There were horrendous stories during my 30 years – the earliest was the Dunblane school massacre. I had to think: "I'm a journalist. This is the story. I'm covering it." I went home and broke down.'

What prompted the career pivot? 'I was getting frustrated by the way controversial conversations were handled, thinking, "How do we have a respectful discussion with all the stakeholders in one place?" I wanted

to be more active when things got heated.'

What drew you to the world of mediation? 'A friend asked if I could give advice to someone going through a high-conflict divorce, since I'd been through one myself. The penny dropped. I trained as a civil and commercial mediator and thought, "This is exactly what I'm supposed to be doing."

What was it like joining a new industry? 'At first, I couldn't see that my skills were transferable. But eventually, I began to understand the synergy. I built a network through passion – observing people who'd been involved in cases I was interested in.'

What motivates you in your new profession? 'When you get a breakthrough and it's resolved, you feel it deeply.'

What is your work motto? "When empathy comes into the room, that's when things transform."

TOP DRAWER

Natalie Salmon, the founder of the female-led tech website the Modems, shares her edit of opulent desk gadgets

Mouse mat, £55, Aspinal of London

Digital paper, £775, Montblanc



Mesh AirPods chain, £67.90, Tapper



Wireless charger, £44.95, Burga

Wireless diffuser, £69, Neom



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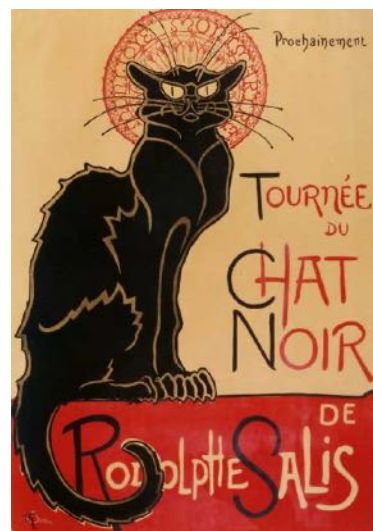
Talking points

EDITED BY
CHARLOTTE BROOK

More than a feline

A new book celebrates culture's obsession with cats. Plus: Annette Bening stars in a Gothic spectacle; David Hockney and Cecily Brown capture a much-loved London park; and six sprightly debuts for your spring reading list

'Clementine's Bookshelf' (2021) by Hilary Pecis



BOOKS

MIAOW FACTOR

A colourfully illustrated tome pays tribute to our enduring love of cats

BY CHARLOTTE BROOK

A new, monumental guide to the house cat's role in visual culture places Grace Coddington's pet Persians and Disney's *The Aristocats* alongside a Hellenic mosaic, Judith Kerr's *Mog* and Doja Cat's beaded 2023 Met Gala bodysuit. Other honourable mentions go to portraits by Edouard Manet, Nan Goldin and Kerry James Marshall, but the most fashionable felines have to be the pair of Maine Coons clutched by a model in an 1896 illustration from the *Harper's Bazaar* archive. The book's text is as intriguing as the pictures: learn how Ancient Egyptian families would shave their eyebrows in mourning after their cats died, and that the collective noun for these creatures is a 'clowder'. Who mew?

'Cat' (£34.95, Phaidon) is out now.

Clockwise from above: illustration by Edward Penfield (1896) in 'Harper's'. Kitten sculpture (2021) by Lalique. 'Tournée du Chat Noir de Rodolphe Salis' (1896) by Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen. 'Brünnhilde' (1936) by Adolph E Weidhaas. 'Cat clawing a partridge' detail (circa 180 BCE) from the House of the Faun, Pompeii. Cat bag (2018) by Thom Browne



"Brünnhilde"

LITERATURE

STRANGER THAN FICTION

The *Life of Pi* author's latest tale draws intriguing parallels between myth and reality

BY ERICA WAGNER

YANN MARTEL FIRST CAME TO MY ATTENTION in 2002, when one of my fellow Booker Prize judges pulled out a title bearing a tiger on its blue cover from a teetering pile: *Life of Pi* became our worthy winner. Martel's novel has been one of the bestselling recipients of the prize and, in 2012, Ang Lee made it into a thrilling, Oscar-winning film.

'My path certainly would have been different without *Life of Pi*,' the author tells me now. 'People still love engaging with it, and wondering what it means, and which is the "true story". Is it about a boy on a boat with a zebra, a hyena, an orangutan and a tiger named Richard Parker, or is there something else? To me, that's the whole point of art, building that kind of relationship with a work.'

That question of which is the 'true' turn of events is one that intrigues Martel; his writing always has many layers and different possibilities for interpretation. While his new book *Son of Nobody* is a departure from what he's done in the past, that meta-textual element remains. In 2010's *Beatrice and Virgil*, the protagonist Henry is trying to write a novel about the Holocaust – a book-within-a-book – while *The High Mountains of Portugal* (2016) consists of three loosely linked tales that invite the reader to ask how and why we create narratives. Whereas these books are all distinguished by their animal characters, in Martel's latest novel human beings are the

focus – but two stories run in parallel. It's up to the reader to choose which is the main one.

Harlow Donne is a Canadian scholar who travels to Oxford to study ancient manuscripts. He discovers fragments of another version of the Trojan War – not an account of a great and famous man such as Achilles or King Priam, but a 'son of nobody', Psoas, who is an ordinary soldier. On the top half of each page we get Martel's (strikingly accomplished) 'Homeric' verse: '...we row our laden ships to the mouth of the bay,/ where we turn westward and gallop like horses/ through the waves...'

Below the poetry, on the main body of the page, are extensive 'footnotes' that contain both textual analysis and Harlow's inner thoughts – his home life, his complicated marriage, the sudden illness of his beloved daughter on the other side of the ocean.

A complex and compelling read, it began, Martel says, when he was 'doing his homework': finally reading *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. 'What blew me away were all the contemporary notes: the Trojan War was a really sterile war, one of attrition. We're very familiar with that in the 20th and 21st centuries – these conflicts where there seems to be no winner.'

There is another parallel too – one that clearly inspired Martel. 'Here's a war run by these big guys who are in charge, the bosses who are screwing everything up. What about the ordinary man? Today, we're ruled by tech moguls, greedy people who are willing to let the Earth go to hell. What about the common man and woman, then and now?'

The author draws my attention to the way the book's unusual structure forces certain decisions on the reader. Do you read the epic poetry all at once, and then the footnotes? Do you skip back and forth? 'You have to make your own story,' Martel says. It's why readers love his books and return to them, because he lets them into the process so dear to his own heart.

'Son of Nobody' by Yann Martel (£20, Canon-gate) is published on 2 April. □



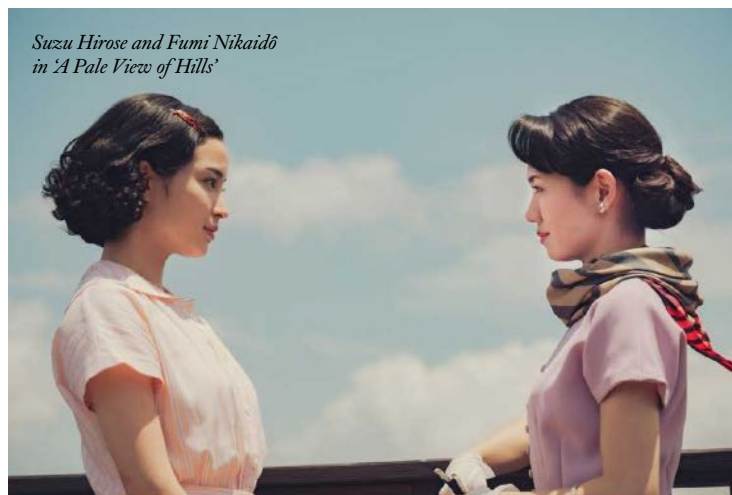
FILM

DOUBLE LIFE

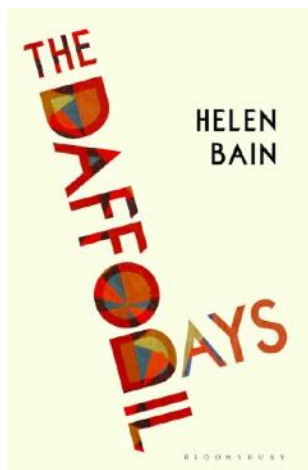
Kazuo Ishiguro's debut novel gets the big-screen treatment

Don't miss the sensuous cinematic adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* (in cinemas from 13 March). Split between timelines – Fifties Nagasaki and Eighties England – the film explores how the impact of the atomic bomb has changed shape over time as memories, not all of them reliably accurate, are imparted from mother to daughter. DANIELLA PARETE CLARKE

Suzu Hirose and Fumi Nikaidō
in *'A Pale View of Hills'*



TALKING POINTS

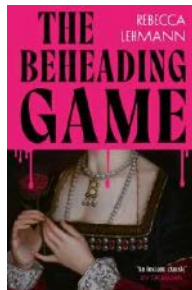


THE LITERARY ROMANCE

THE DAFFODIL DAYS
BY HELEN BAIN

Bell-ringing, village gossip and community spirit run through this story about a key year in the life of Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes.

Out on 12 March (£18.99, Bloomsbury).



THE GHOST STORY

THE BEHEADING GAME
BY REBECCA LEHMANN

What if Anne Boleyn's death weren't the end of her story?

Join her revenge-driven ghost on a riotous adventure.

Out on 26 March (£16.99, Harvill).

THE DARK COMEDY

THE INFAMOUS GILBERTS

BY ANGELA TOMASKI

Snoop around an English manor before the secrets of its family are destroyed for ever in this witty romp.

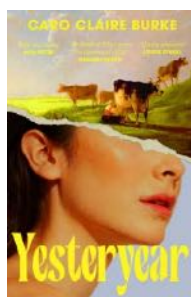
Out now (£16.99, Fig Tree).

THE SOCIAL CRITIQUE

YESTERYEAR
BY CARO CLAIRE BURKE

The savvy tradwife satire that everyone is talking about follows a mother whose perfect life suddenly takes a dive into an alternate, borderline-dystopian reality.

Out on 9 April (£16.99, Fourth Estate).

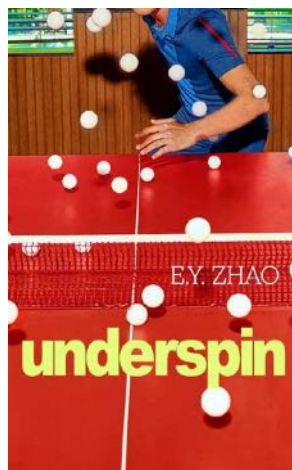
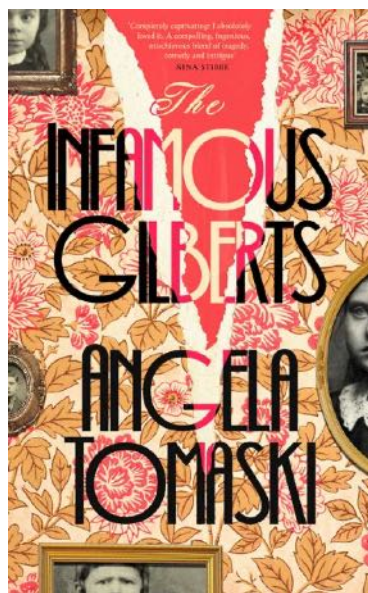


BOOKS

FIRST IN CLASS

Introducing the dazzling debuts that deserve to top your to-read pile

BY DANIELLA PARETE CLARKE



THE SPORTS THRILLER

UNDERSPIN
BY EY ZHAO

If you liked *Marty Supreme*, you'll love this fast-paced novel in which a relentlessly ambitious player rises to the top of his game in the high-stakes world of table tennis – but what goes up must come down.

Out now (£16.99, Doubleday).



THE ANTHEMIC BILDUNGSROMAN

IN BLOOM
BY LIZ ALLAN

In Nineties Australia, four girls form a grunge band in an attempt to transform what they see as tragically dull teenage years into an era of freedom. The consequences are mixed – and take place at top volume.

Out on 12 March (£16.99, Hodder & Stoughton).



EXHIBITIONS

SAVAGE GARDEN

In a spellbinding show, Cecily Brown transforms English parkland into eerie dreamscapes

BY FRANCES HEDGES

THE LAST TIME I INTERVIEWED CECILY BROWN, IT WAS EARLY IN 2020 and neither of us had any idea that a pandemic was about to put our lives on hold. The British artist, who has been based in New York for the past three decades, was preparing to exhibit her work at Blenheim Palace; we talked, then, about her nostalgic vision of the English countryside and the darkness lying beneath its veneer, manifested in her enchanting yet menacing creations.

'I never got to see it, by the way,' says Brown, ruefully, of the exhibition, which was postponed due to successive lockdowns. This year, she hopes to return for her Serpentine presentation, which – like its forerunner, and in similarly idyllic surroundings – will conjure a vision of lush beauty with a threatening undertone. Her inspirations come from Kensington Gardens itself, of which she has fond memories from her time as an art student (she recalls seeing the work of her then teacher Maggi Hambling at the Serpentine back in 1987) and from children's-book illustrations, too. 'Looking back at things from when I was little, from Beatrix Potter and *Orlando the Marmalade Cat* to vintage Ladybird books, I've come to realise how influential they were in terms of using a picture to enter another world,' she says. Like the best fairy tales, her recent paintings blur the lines between fantasy and fear. 'It might look like a scene of a walk in the park, but there's someone behind every tree. I'm trying to find that place where things are just slightly distorted and there's an edge of unease or paranoia.'

The artworks, which include a rendition of the gallery and feature Brown's signature energetic brushstrokes and rich palette, sit alongside archival pieces – among them an aptly selected series of boating scenes, in which human bodies seem to dissolve into the watery backdrop – and several pen-and-ink pictures. 'They're very much working drawings – I'll take an image and draw it over and over, so that when I paint, I know the subject so well that it just comes out,' she says, adding that her approach helps viewers to decode her paintings. Indeed, all her work invites a lingering gaze; the longer you look, the more secrets you may find. 'I like to trip people up,' adds Brown. 'My hope is that there's always something to catch their eye and lure them in.' *'Cecily Brown: Picture Making'* is at the Serpentine South Gallery (serpentinegalleries.org) from 27 March to 6 September. □



Top: 'Nature Walk with Paranoia' (2024) by Cecily Brown. Right: the artist. Below: 'The Serpentine Picture' (2024)



TALKING POINTS

F I L M

A WOMAN OF PARTS

In *The Bride!*, Annette Bening continues her lifelong quest to deconstruct archetypes

BY CHARLOTTE BROOK

'I LOVE THAT IT'S FEMINIST, IT'S PUNK, IT'S GOT MUSIC AND DANCING, and it sucks you in to a visually arresting, bizarre and fascinating world,' Annette Bening says, describing her new film *The Bride!*. 'But also, at its heart is a love story. That's how I see it.'

The genre-defying spectacle is the writer and director Maggie Gyllenhaal's fresh, ferocious Gothic thriller about what happens when Frankenstein's monster (known here as Frank and played by Christian Bale) commissions himself a lover in 1930s Chicago. Bening plays Dr Euphronius, a seemingly eccentric and ethically dubious scientist who helps Frank revive a murdered woman – Ida, a bewitching Jessie Buckley. The film gives ordinarily overlooked women agency: we witness a lonely Frank and the women shaping his existence soul-search and grapple to find their place in a confusing country of misogyny, mobsters and technological advances.

We hear one particular line – 'I would prefer not to' – spoken by Ida crisply and repeatedly throughout the film, sometimes with anger, sometimes amusement. But it is perhaps most powerful when delivered in the closing minutes by the increasingly self-aware doctor, with Bening clearly relishing every syllable. 'I think it's the cry from within every woman,' she says. 'The chance for us to decide: "I'm not going to go along to get along." For us to say no neatly, without explanation nor apology.'

The Bride! also takes an unflinching look at the light and shade in every human. 'Maggie was a woman possessed making this, on fire with all sorts of ideas. She wanted to explore how there are monstrous aspects inside each of us, yet how we can all still find



From top: Annette Bening, Bening and Christian Bale in *'The Bride!'*. A still from *'American Beauty'*

things to love in one other,' Bening continues. It makes sense that she was drawn to the project: the famously versatile actress – who has been Oscar-nominated for her depictions of strong, seldom straightforward characters in films including *American Beauty*, *The Kids Are All Right* and *Nyad* – has spent her career making the case for multifaceted female roles. 'It's funny,' she says, recalling her part in *American Beauty* as Carolyn, the status-conscious estate agent whose husband is in the throes of a midlife crisis. 'I remember someone talking to me about her, saying: "Ah, she's the villain." I was so shocked. I felt a lot of love towards her and still do.'

It's not lost on Bening that change remains a challenge when it comes to portraying what she calls 'women's nuance' on screen. 'God knows, stereotypes are still alive and well,' she says. 'But if you're willing to look around, there are people both female and male telling stories that are much more authentic and interesting.' They are lucky to count Bening a shining stalwart among them. *'The Bride!' is in cinemas now.* □

EXHIBITIONS

HAUTE TICKET

Enter the world of an unconventional couturière at the V&A



A dress from Schiaparelli's haute couture A/W 22 show

Cristóbal Balenciaga once called Elsa Schiaparelli 'the only real artist in couture'. The V&A's upcoming presentation on the Italian designer – who attributed her trademark shocking pink to the hue found in Pavel Tchelitchew's 1925 work *Basket of Strawberries* – puts her connections with painters and sculptors, as well as her own creativity, in the limelight. Discover her daring approach to life and fashion, keeping an eye out for collaborations with Jean Cocteau and Salvador Dalí, including the 'Lobster' dress famously worn by Wallis Simpson. From 16 April, visitors will find limited-edition copies of *Bazaar's* May issue in the museum's gift shop, featuring a special cover and the story behind the magazine's long, fruitful relationship with the pioneer herself. cb
'Schiaparelli: Fashion Becomes Art' is at the V&A South Kensington (vam.ac.uk) from 28 March.

The 'Lobster' dress, designed by Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí (1937)





FASHION

HIT FOR SIX

How Antwerp's most famous fashion rebels took the industry by storm

BY AVRIL MAIR

Power and influence can come from unlikely places – and this is certainly the case with Belgium, a small country whose impact on global fashion has been almost incalculable. In 1986, a sextet of Belgian designers debuted their work at a Kensington Olympia trade show ahead of London Fashion Week. The location may have been inauspicious, but the collections of Dries Van Noten, Ann Demeulemeester, Dirk Van Saene, Walter Van Beirendonck, Dirk Bikkembergs and Marina Yee became the talk of the town. Their radical ideas (along with those of their contemporary Martin Margiela, an honorary member of the collective but who did not travel to London) challenged the dominance of Paris at the time. Inspired by the social climate, street culture and nightlife, their creative viewpoints shaped those of subsequent generations.

Belgian designers are now at the heart of the industry their predecessors subverted: think of Chanel's Matthieu Blazy; Prada's Raf Simons; Yves Saint Laurent's Anthony Vaccarello; and Pieter Mulier taking up the Versace reins in July. Then there are the others who made the pilgrimage to study at Antwerp's Royal Academy of Fine Arts, including Demna at Gucci. To mark 40 years since the maverick Antwerp Six put Belgian design on the map, the city's MoMu Museum is holding an exhibition showcasing their lasting legacy. As its co-curator Geert Bruloot says: 'They never meant to be a group, and they are each very individual. But what a vision, and the myth lives on today.'

'The Antwerp Six' is at MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp (momu.be) from 28 March until 17 January. □



From top: the Antwerp Six, 1987, published in 'WWD'. Dirk Van Saene A/W 91-92. The Antwerp Six in 1985



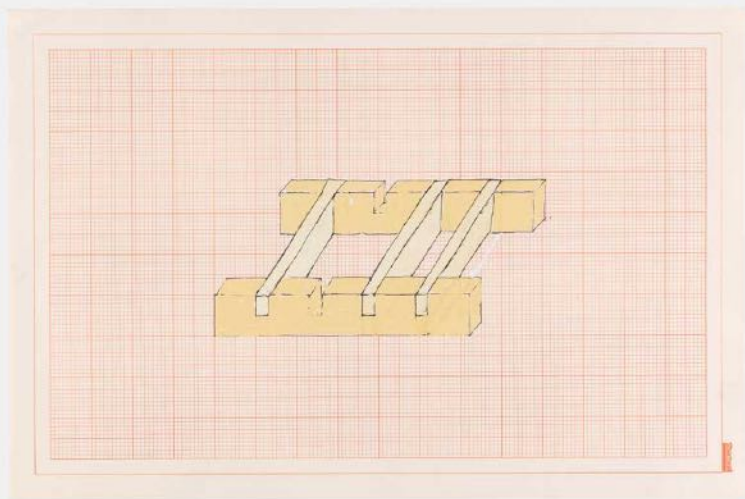
From top: Ann Demeulemeester S/S 84. Dirk Bikkembergs S/S 08. Below: Marina Yee S/S 88

PHOTOGRAPHS: PATRICK ROBYN, PHILIPPE COSTES, LUC WILLIAME, PATRICK ROBYN, DIRK VAN SAENE, ANDREW MACPHERSON, ALAMY, GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES © 2025 SALVADOR DALI FUNDACIO GALA-SALVADOR DALI, DACS, PHOTO PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF MME ELSA SCHIAPARELLI, 1969-232-52, © GIOVANNI GIANNONI, PHOTO COURTESY PATRIMOINE SCHIAPARELLI, PARIS

SHOW YOUR WORKINGS



In a pair of illuminating exhibitions, the Turner Prize-winning artist Rachel Whiteread shares a hitherto unseen aspect to her practice, alongside the large-scale, often politically charged installations for which she is best known. At Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert in St James's, she reveals drawings from throughout her career in an eponymous show (*until 18 April; hh-h.com*), while 'Substitute' at Mayfair's Gagosian, a display of new sculptures and photographs, explores her versatility across media (*from 26 March to 30 May; gagosian.com*).



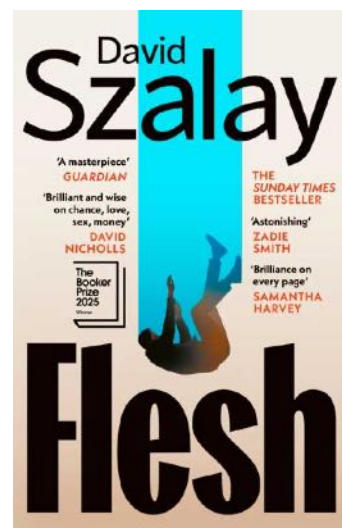
Works by Rachel Whiteread at Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert, clockwise from above: 'Untitled (Black Bed)' (1991). 'Floor' (1992). 'Convex Concave' (1992)

BOOKS

THE WORD MADE...

Devour a prize-winning literary tour de force

Spare in style yet deeply affecting, David Szalay's novel *Flesh* is a powerful portrait of István, a Hungarian man who begins life in the Eastern Bloc before going on to rub shoulders precariously with Britain's one per cent. It deservedly won the latest Booker Prize and is out in portable, paperback form (£9.99, Vintage) on 19 March.





Cecile Pin on how the allure of space travel inspired her new novel

I grew up a city kid, with stars barely visible under Paris' light-polluted skies. But in those glimpses of our moon, of constellations and other mysterious realms, I found a place in which my imagination could run wild, and enough to stir an insatiable curiosity. Still, I've always wondered why anyone would want to travel to space. How would you deal with the claustrophobic environment? Your loved ones and the comforts of life on Earth being hundreds of miles away?

Ollie, my latest novel's astronaut protagonist, comes of age during the Noughties, amid the financial crisis, wars and the rise of social media. It's a world that's shedding some of its innocence. At that time, Elon Musk founded SpaceX, Jeff Bezos Blue Origin and Richard Branson Virgin Galactic. Once seen as a scientific adventure, space travel has become a billionaire-funded enterprise, losing a certain idealism in the process.

At the heart of the story is a longing to find that blissful state once more: to see the world through rose-tinted lenses, as we do in childhood, when everything seems, as William Wordsworth put it, 'apparelled in celestial light'. I wanted to show different characters seeking a means to find that light again – whether it be through nature, religion, love or, in Ollie's case, exploring our universe.

As for me, I'll stay down here on Earth – but what a treat it has been to discover the cosmos through writing this conflicted character's story.

'Celestial Lights' by Cecile Pin (£16.99, HarperCollins) is out on 26 March.

THE WORD MADE: BY HELENA LEE. WRITTEN IN THE STARS: AS TOLD TO CHARLOTTE BROOK. PHOTOGRAPHS: © DAVID HOCKNEY, PRUDENCE CUMING, GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF RACHEL WHITEHEAD



ART

TURN, TURN, TURN

Experience David Hockney's uplifting vision of the changing seasons

Ahead of the Bayeux Tapestry arriving at the British Museum later this year, David Hockney's 90-metre frieze inspired by the 11th-century masterpiece forms the centre of a new show at the Serpentine. *A Year in Normandie* is composed of 220 iPad pictures – depicting nature's transformation at the artist's home in France – that became emblems of hope in 2020 when Hockney shared them during the darkest days of lockdown.

Anyone looking for life-affirming respite by way of vivid fields, blossoming trees and unfurling irises can visit the free exhibition in London, where they will also find the painter's works created in response to Hyde Park's own thriving ecology. CB *'David Hockney: A Year in Normandie and Some Other Thoughts About Painting' is at the Serpentine North Gallery (serpentinegalleries.org) from 12 March until 23 August.*



Works by David Hockney from his latest exhibition, from top: 'Jack Ransome Resting on an Orange and White Checkered Tablecloth' (2025). 'Abstraction Resting on a Green and White Checkered Tablecloth' (2025). A detail from 'A Year in Normandie' (2020-2021)

Caribbean

MADE OF CARIBBEAN

A lot of resorts have rooms with a view. Ours are designed to be part of it. From iconic Overwater Bungalows to secluded Rondoval Villas shaped like mountaintops, every stay immerses you in the beauty of the Caribbean. With over 40 years of experience, Sandals Resorts has perfected award-winning, all-inclusive Caribbean holidays. All that's left for you to do is sit back and savour every moment.

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BAZAAR

living

EDITED BY
FRANCES HEDGES

Light touch

How the Shabby Chic founder Rachel Ashwell brought her hallmark whimsical elegance to a dreamy Somerset manor. Plus: earthy hues, floral furnishings, time-travelling interiors and why we're all eating bread again

The entrance hall in Rachel Ashwell's home



From far left: the linen room. A fringed lamp in the snug. Rachel Ashwell with her dog George

INTERIORS

CHINTZ CHARMING

Rachel Ashwell's Somerset abode epitomises the homeware entrepreneur's brand of shabby chic

BY FRANCES HEDGES

RACHEL ASHWELL NEVER INTENDED TO START A MOVEMENT. LIVING in Los Angeles in the late 1980s, where she had moved from London with dreams of becoming a screen writer, she opened a small homeware store in Santa Monica, thinking that shop-keeping would suit her lifestyle as a mother of two young children. Although self-taught (she dropped out of school aged 16), she had a good design eye, sharpened through antique hunting with her father, a rare-book dealer, and observing her mother, who restored vintage dolls. The boutique, with its curation of flea-market finds whose homely, timeworn beauty stood out amid California's glossy, polished interiors, quickly attracted a cult following. 'We

had Madonna, Bruce Springsteen, Gwyneth Paltrow – every single celebrity landed in there,' she recalls, adding that her signature slipcovers for chairs and sofas became her bestselling product.

So it was that the age of shabby chic – a term Ashwell coined and trademarked – was ushered in. She went on to become a household name in the US, hosting a TV show, appearing on *Oprah* and taking on commissions for high-profile clients including Pamela Anderson, whose waterfront home in Malibu she helped decorate.

Her most recent project, however, has been a personal one. Three years ago, with her children now grown up and some of her day-to-day business operations wound down (Ashwell no longer runs Shabby Chic stores, though her products are still sold through third-party retailers in the US and the UK), she decided to relocate to the British countryside. Inspired by two close friends – the designer Pearl Lowe and the late Cabbages & Roses founder Christina Strutt – she chose Somerset for her base and, after a three-year-long search, identified Meadow Manor as the place to begin her new chapter. Her latest book charts the process of making that Grade II-listed property her own, introducing her preferred palette of white, cream and soft pastels, and finding a home for treasured possessions gathered over the years. Sumptuous chintz sofas patterned with faded roses, crystal chandeliers and tasselled lampshades are joined by porcelain candlesticks, religious figurines and watercolour paintings, while lovingly created floral displays add a decorative flourish. For all its feminine frills and ruffles, the result is surprisingly serene. 'I like to have breathing space – the mood is romantic and cosy but still minimal,' says Ashwell.

Her business began at a time when social media did not exist; today, a proliferation of content creators unveil perfectly appointed bucolic boltholes (you could argue that cottagecore is a direct descendant of shabby chic). What distinguishes Ashwell's is that every object has a personal history, rather than being strategically sourced to set a particular tone. 'Right now, I'm sitting in my kitchen on an old French chair I've had for probably 25 years,' she says, explaining that almost nothing in Meadow Manor is newly acquired. 'They're like humans to me – I look at them and think of all the houses I've lived in and all the memories they hold. I hope that's where the future of consumerism lies.'

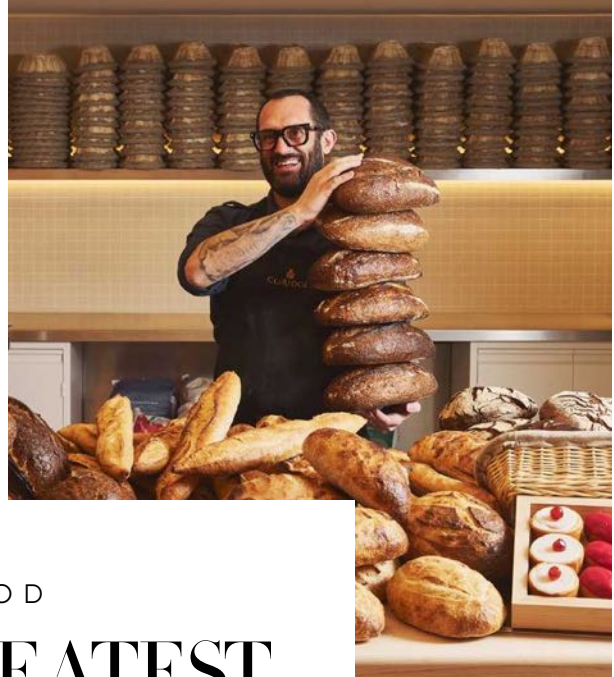
'Meadow Manor' by Rachel Ashwell (£35, Cico Books) is out now. □



When Taylor Swift gave her close friends the Haim sisters a gift of her home-baked bread earlier this year, she proved that, far from being a pandemic-based fad, sourdough still reigns supreme. Indeed, the latest market reports have elevated it from a niche pastime to a 'super trend', with projected global growth of about £2.2 billion by 2034, partly due to perceptions of its health benefits in comparison with its more traditional rivals.

Against this backdrop, the appeal of the 'cult bakery' appears to be greater than ever, with Claridge's becoming the latest to make its mark on the highly competitive scene. At the helm of the hotel's new venue on Mayfair's Brook's Mews is the sourdough aficionado Richard Hart, best known for founding Copenhagen's ever-expanding and beloved Hart Bageri, whose repertoire of granary loaves and bloomers sits alongside classic teatime treats such as iced fingers and Belgian buns.

Elsewhere in London, top players include Fulham's Little Sourdough Kitchen, acquired recently by the chef Phil Howard and offering a nutritious spelt, einkorn and rye loaf; Covent Garden's Tokkia, with its selection of Korean salt breads; and Soho's Onsu, where the Dorchester's former executive pastry chef Michael Kwan brings the flavours of Hong Kong to creations including black truffle toast and wagyu beef curry buns. We are never, ever, going back to sliced... FH Claridge's Bakery (claridges.co.uk). Tokkia (tokkia.world). Little Sourdough Kitchen (@littlesourdoughkitchen). Onsu (@onsubakery). □



Clockwise from top: the baker and chef Richard Hart. Onsu's Japanese salt bread. Sourdough from Claridge's Bakery. A rye loaf from Little Sourdough Kitchen

FOOD

THE GREATEST THING SINCE...

In our carbohydrate-fearing era, the future of the supermarket loaf may be at risk, but artisan bread is on the rise

Below: an interior featuring Holmes Bespoke's new 'In Bloom' collection

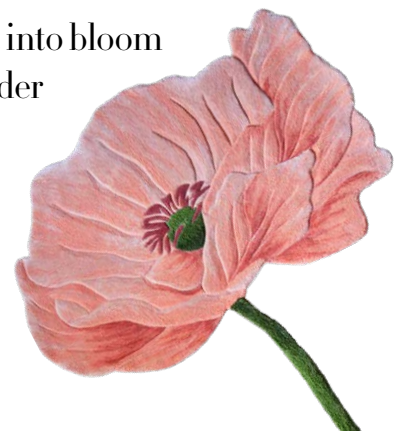


DECORATION

PETAL POWER

Let your floors and walls burst into bloom with Laylah Holmes' trio of made-to-order rugs that double as tapestries, each named after a word for poppy: Papavero, Amapola and Mohnblume.

From £1,950, Holmes Bespoke (holmesbespoke.com).





Rachel Aisling Walker. Clockwise from right: a glazed teapot and cups from her own collection. The living-room in Walker's Camden town-house project. A study in Notting Hill designed by Walker



DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT

THROUGH THE AGES

Rachel Aisling Walker's sophisticated architectural schemes traverse different eras

BY FRANCES HEDGES

RACHEL AISLING WALKER'S LONDON studio is serenity incarnate. The interior architect occupies two floors of a Georgian town house in a quiet corner of Islington: one serving as a showroom, beautifully appointed with pieces from her collection of furniture and ceramics, and the other as her team's office, its cork-clad walls doubling as moodboards for her growing portfolio of projects.

Walker, who established her practice in 2021 after gaining experience under Rose Uniacke, has already achieved recognition for her elegant, pared-back schemes that combine the beauty of period architecture with strategic contemporary insertions. Raised close to Lake Maggiore but with Irish as well as Italian roots, the designer (who has been based in the UK since moving to Cardiff for her degree) says that her dual heritage has informed her work. 'My love of craft comes from Italy, where there's a strong tradition of local artisanship, but I've

also been influenced by memories of my grandparents' beautiful old country house in Cork, which had lovely wrought-iron beds and hand-embroidered linens,' she says. Her own projects, which range from a period home in Holland Park and an artist's mews house in Holborn to a remote property in the Hebrides and an art deco gem in New York City, are united by their muted yet warm palettes and tasteful curation of antique finds. 'I always like to include a mix of periods and provenances,' says Walker, who frequently sources pieces at British and European auctions, and through dealers from Paris to Pimlico.

Most recently, Walker has launched a selection of made-to-order designs – including upholstered sofas and armchairs, sculptural lampshades and glazed ceramic teapots with contrasting basket-woven handles – so that clients can recreate her refined aesthetic in their own homes. rachelaaislingwalker.com □



BOOKS

SUNNY SIDE UP

Take an eggs-perimental approach to your Easter baking this year with inspiration from the pastry chef Maxine Scheckter's

new cookbook *Pâtisserie Made Simple* (£35, Kitchen Press), featuring a coconut, yuzu and mango fried egg gâteau and hot cross bun mousse cakes.



DRINK

SPIRITS OF THE LAND

A quartet of delicious distillations rooted in nature

FROM THE DALES



Wild Ram Yorkshire Berry London Dry Gin, £37.95, Yorkshire Dales Distillery

FROM THE COAST



Coastal Spritz Non-Alcoholic Aperitif, £28, Pentire

FROM THE LAKES



The Lakes Vodka, £38, the Lakes Distillery

FROM THE MOORS



Dark Moorland 23-Year-Old Blended Scotch Whisky, £165, Wildmoor at the Whisky Shop

Crayfish Party BH19 paint, £35 for 1 litre, Mylands x Beata Heuman



Candle, £29, Ferm Living



Rug, from £429, Heal's

DECORATING

FOR THE BEAUTY OF EARTH

Fill your interior with rich terracotta hues for year-round comfort

'I wanted to feel like I was diving into a Rothko,' says the artist Sussy Cazalet of the inspiration behind the earthy palette that she used to transform her Norfolk cottage. 'I'd moved there from London and the house felt very damp, unloved, cold and white – the warm colours were a reaction to that.' She worked with the historic paint manufacturer Mylands to design a bespoke set of ochres, burnt siennas, reds and pinks that flow together beautifully, anchored by her own abstract textile artworks.

Cazalet's theme taps into a wider interiors movement, one that veers away from oversaturated shades, such as millennial pink, and towards more muted, grounding

options. She suggests using a spectrum of tones to add movement and introducing texture – tapestries, rugs, blankets and cushions – for variety. Rosewood wardrobes or cabinets bring warmth and drama to a living-room, while terracotta kitchenware is a shortcut to cosy rusticity.

A mix of soft and hard surfaces in corresponding hues can draw together a scheme; try pairing terrazzo tiles in rust, off-white and chocolate brown, as seen in Bert & May's recent collaboration with Popham Design, with natural materials including oak, rattan and linen. 'I think there's a real desire right now for spaces that feel tactile and crafted, with colours echoing nature,' says Bert & May's founder Lee Thornley. 'They help create interiors that feel cocooning and lived-in.' FH □



Clockwise from top left: Sussy Cazalet's living-room. A dining area featuring tiles by Bert & May x Popham Design. A rosewood wardrobe in a bedroom by HollandGreen

LIVING



Pillowcase, £195,
Ralph Lauren Home



Bowl and saucer,
£425, Tiffany & Co



Print, £45, Rosanna Corfe



Candles, £4.68 for two, Sostrene Grene



Plates, £260 for two, Gucci at Mytheresa



INTERIORS
GREEN SHOOTS

Twirling tendrils and delicate florals for a fresh spring mood

COMPILED BY GRACE CLARKE



Blankets,
£1,550 each, Dior
Maison

Cushion, £175,
Les-Ottomans



Bottle,
£290,
Cabana

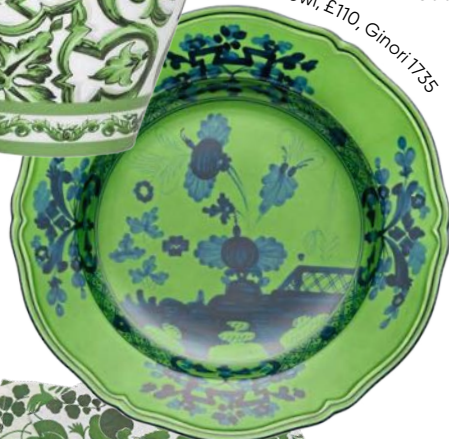


Dresser, £6,915,
Porte Italia at Artemest

Vase,
£925,
Dolce &
Gabbana



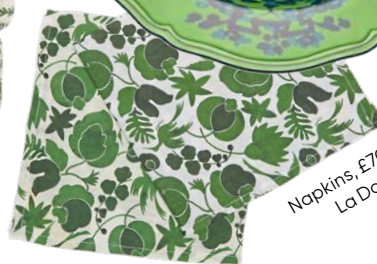
Soup bowl, £110, Ginori 1735



Candle holders,
£185 for two,
Bitossi Home



Chair, £1,495, Oka



Napkins, £70 for two,
La Double J

Harper's BAZAAR

THE FASHIONABLE HOME
Reflections on the art of stylish living



DON'T MISS OUR INTERIORS SPECIAL IN THE MAY ISSUE,
ON SALE FROM 16 APRIL





Harper's BAZAAR

APRIL 2026

This month, we set the stage for spring with a bouquet-bedecked shoot celebrating one of the brightest talents of stage and screen, Rachel Zegler, who shares the story behind her meteoric rise as she returns to tread the boards of the West End. We also take a front-row seat at an exhibition decoding the secrets of the late Queen's wardrobe; and revel in fashion at its most exuberant, with dramatic, crowd-pleasing colour and playful silhouettes. On with the show!

Photograph by *ALEXI LUBOMIRSKI*

Rachel Zegler wears gold and diamond earrings; matching necklace, both from a selection, TIFFANY & CO. Sheer dress (just seen), £6,938, GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON

FORCE of NATURE

From finding herself at the centre of a media furore surrounding her casting as a Disney princess to winning over the critics as Evita in the West End, the actress Rachel Zegler has already endured all the highs and lows of fame. Here, she sits down with *Frances Hedges* to discuss how she is flourishing on her own terms

Photographs by
ALEXI

LUBOMIRSKI

Styled by

MIRANDA
ALMOND



Rachel Zegler wears
silk twill dress, £7,500,
GUCCI. White gold
and diamond ring
(left), £4,550; platinum
and diamond ring,
from a selection, both
TIFFANY & CO



Silk twill dress, £7,500, GUCCI. Platinum and diamond earrings, £8,750; (from left) white gold and diamond ring, £4,550; platinum and diamond ring, from a selection; white gold and diamond ring, £10,800, all TIFFANY & CO



S

omebody told me the other day that I'd aged very well,' confides Rachel Zegler, raising her eyebrows in incredulity. 'I was like, "I'm still in utero! I'm a zygote..."'

It is patently absurd to describe the 24-year-old New Jersey-born actress,

whose distinctive heart-shaped face makes her a striking presence both on and off the screen, as anything other than the picture of youthful vivacity. Still, Zegler has lived through more than her fair share of ups and downs since starting her career in show business as a teenager – so perhaps it is no wonder she comes across as more mature than her years. Sitting down to chat with me at a café in New York's West Village on a snowy January morning, she is warm, earnest and open, dressed down in jeans and a thick cardigan, with a pair of round *Harry Potter* spectacles perched on her nose.

'Honestly, the way people comment on women's bodies and their faces, no matter what we say or do... It's going to have an effect on how we perceive ourselves and the way we choose to age,' she continues. 'Everybody's doing everything they can to prevent ageing, and I don't want to do that. It's proof you've been here and lived a life. I have a mum who embraced that – she refuses to dye her hair because she loves her greys, and I love that about her. That's the example I have going forward.'

It's fortunate that Zegler has a strong foundation of support from her family – and such a healthy dose of common sense – because there have been plenty of people who have done their best to bring her down. The star, whose career took off from

nowhere when she was selected from open auditions to play Maria in Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story* aged just 17, lived through the very best and worst effects of fame last year: she became a target of relentless trolling and spiralling controversy following her casting in Disney's 2025 *Snow White* live-action remake, and was scapegoated for the film's mediocre box-office figures, only to return in force for her West End run of *Evita* a matter of months later. She is now poised to return to the London Palladium, the scene of her redemption – although, as she observes pointedly, 'You have to have actually done something wrong in order to be redeemed' – for what is set to be an equally triumphant performance in the Broadway hit *The Last Five Years*.

What emerges from every chapter in this story of highs and lows is Zegler's commitment to her craft. 'I caught the acting bug early, because my parents took me to Broadway shows when I was very little,' says the actress, who was born in 2001 (her mother's heritage is Colombian and her father's Polish). 'I started auditioning when I was a tween, like 11 or 12, and then just found myself unable to think about anything else.' Contrary to some unfounded nepo-baby accusations on social media – doubtless made enviously after she was named among the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 in 2022 – no one in her family was in entertainment. She forged her own path in the industry, albeit with the full backing of her parents, who, she says, never saw her ambition as 'a silly pipe dream', instead agreeing to pay for her singing lessons and help her travel to auditions. Like many of her Gen Z peers, she exploited the power of technology to her advantage, putting out YouTube videos of herself singing pop and musical-theatre numbers. Is she now embarrassed about those clips, many of which still circulate on the internet? 'I don't regret a single second,' she says firmly. 'I admire that girl's chutzpah. I admire who she was, who I still am – which is confident in the knowledge that the worst anyone can say is, "No, not today."'



Satin dress, from a selection, BALENCIAGA. Rose gold and diamond necklace; matching bracelet, both from a selection, TIFFANY & CO

Silk dress, £5,000,
LOUIS VUITTON. Gold,
diamond and pearl
earrings, £11,700; matching
ring (just seen), £7,950,
both TIFFANY & CO



'I WAS TOLD I WASN'T ENOUGH OF ONE THING FOR *WEST SIDE STORY* AND TOO MUCH OF ANOTHER FOR *SNOW WHITE*'

There is one particular old video of Zegler that is still widely viewed, and that is her audition tape for *West Side Story*. 'It's being taught, God help me, three blocks away from here in a casting class,' she says. 'That's both horrifying and also very validating.' The actress was chosen from more than 30,000 hopefuls: the realisation of every drama student's wildest dreams, but by no means, reveals Zegler, a source of instant gratification. 'Steven [Spielberg] and I have an inside joke where he's like, "I made you sweat out the ages of 16 and 17." It's crazy, because I auditioned for a year. They kept bringing me in, kept telling me they were still looking at bigger names. I wasn't a name at all!' At the time, she didn't even have an agent, so she entered the showbiz arena with very little protection and, while she knew she was in safe hands with Spielberg ('I mean, you can't really argue with his ability to make a star – we have people like Whoopi Goldberg and Christian Bale because of him...'), she says she would have liked to have developed greater emotional maturity before being thrust into the spotlight. 'I wish I'd had maybe five more years on me before all that happened – a little more of a frontal lobe.' The hardest part was waiting to enjoy the fruits of her labour. 'I was cast in 2019, but nobody would see the film until late 2021, so it felt like everyone was holding their breath in anticipation, while telling me to my face how I'd better not fuck this up,' she recalls. 'I was a star, but with the caveat that I still had to prove myself.'

And prove herself she did, winning critical acclaim and a Best Actress trophy at the 2022 Golden Globes. Yet as her profile rose, it seemed there were still many intent on tearing her down. The 2023 superhero sequel *Shazam! Fury of the Gods*, in which Zegler joins Helen Mirren and Lucy Liu as the third in a trio of vengeful immortals, was used as a stick to beat her with, despite being conceived as crowd-pleasing entertainment with no delusions of grandeur. 'Looking back, I'm able to laugh at the think

pieces that came out about a family film for kids,' says Zegler wryly. 'And at the end of the day, I think of those reviews and go, "Well, I'm in a group chat with Helen..."'

The vitriol she encountered during and after the filming of *Snow White* was somehow harder to take in her stride, not least because it was fuelled by racial prejudice. Her casting was accompanied by an outcry from those who claimed that her Colombian ancestry made her unsuitable for the role and that this was an example of a 'woke' diversity hire – a particularly difficult thing to hear for a star who had previously had to endure suggestions that she wasn't sufficiently Hispanic to play Maria, who is Puerto Rican, in *West Side Story*. 'I was told I wasn't enough of one thing for *West Side Story* and too much of another for *Snow White*,' she says. 'It was a really confusing time to be in my early twenties and hearing that. I grew up proud of being Colombian – eating the food, wearing the dresses, drinking the coffee, doing all the things that were so intrinsic to who I was as a kid and who I am as an adult – but I do think there's an argument to be made that, in the public eye at least, when you're two things, you're simultaneously nothing. But I refuse to assimilate for anybody else's comfort.' Her mother, on the other hand, built her life 'in an era of assimilation being a tactic for survival' – very much the image of immigration we see portrayed in *West Side Story*. 'It was the experience of so many people in my family: the idea that you will get a job, you will be American, and that's how you survive – that's the only way you're guaranteed a future.' I suggest that it's a sentiment that resonates even more powerfully in Trump's America; she won't be drawn into a political debate, but acknowledges that what's happening in her country is 'very difficult to witness in real time'.

Zegler is understandably careful with her words since the *Snow White* controversy that began with her casting spiralled out of



Organza dress, £1,395; beaded mules, from a selection, both SIMONEROCHA. Platinum, gold and diamond earrings; matching bracelet; matching necklace, all from a selection, TIFFANY & CO

ALEXI LUBOMIRSKI

Cloqué dress, £6,300,
MIU MIU. Gold and
diamond earrings;
matching bracelet,
both price on request;
matching ring, £5,800,
all TIFFANY & CO





‘REGARDLESS OF WHAT WOMEN GO THROUGH IN THE PUBLIC EYE, THEY’RE THERE FOR A REASON’

control when she shared certain opinions with the world, first about the outdated portrayal of the heroine in the original film (cue the wrath of an army of die-hard Disney fans) and later, more seriously, when she publicly supported Palestinian human rights on social media. Her remarks were interpreted as particularly incendiary because her co-star Gal Gadot is a former Israel Defense Forces soldier; rumours of tension between the two women abounded.

Zegler has never retracted her comments and nor does she do so with me today, arguing: ‘I’ve said what I feel, and that will always be a testament to my core beliefs as a human. That’s where I stand.’ She does, however, admit that the situation was ‘a complete study in intent versus impact’. ‘You live and you learn, and there’s a caution that comes with that,’ she continues. ‘There’s an understanding that the temptation to speak doesn’t always mean that it must be done, and that there are a lot of opportunities to make more meaningful change than a tweet.’ When I ask her whether, looking back, she thinks she ought to have anticipated the backlash, she shakes her head. ‘If I’d been able to predict everything that would come my way, the threats to my safety, I would have just thrown my phone into the ocean,’ she says. ‘I think any sane person would have.’

Support came from her *Shazam!* castmates Mirren and Liu, who, she says, took her out for dinner and shopping in Atlanta to cheer her up and shared advice on how to navigate life as an actress. ‘We’d have long conversations about what it means to be a woman in this industry, and the disappointments they both faced at times,’ she says, adding that they taught her to ‘show up for other women’, particularly young actresses. ‘That’s why when Whitney Peak got cast in the new *Hunger Games*, I reached out to say, “I’m here, even though I hope to God you don’t need me.” And the next time a woman of colour is cast as a Disney princess, I’ll be there with bells on to support

them, to lift them up, to advise and to tell them what not to do.’

What Zegler herself did was remain dignified in the face of the frenzy being whipped up around her, instead focusing on what her next career move should be. She had already made a convincing Broadway debut as Juliet to Kit Connor’s Romeo – the run, which ended in February 2025, broke records for attracting the youngest ever crowd of theatre-goers – so the West End felt like a natural choice. ‘I was like, “Let me go show people what I can do, eight times a week,”’ she says. ‘I’m gonna sing, I’m gonna dance, I’m gonna act, I’m gonna make you cry, I’m gonna make you want to sing along, but I’m gonna do it in front of your face.’ Starring in Jamie Lloyd’s production of *Evita*, which was styled like a stripped-back pop-rock concert, she made an impression not only with her pitch-perfect vocals, but also with the raw emotion she brought to the part when, each evening, she stepped out onto the balcony of the Palladium to address a rapt crowd in the street with her rendition of ‘Don’t Cry For Me Argentina’.

The performances, she says, ‘immediately flipped the script’. She was hailed in the press as a revelation – an instance of swerving public opinion that chimed rather neatly with the story of Eva Péron herself, who was reviled and adored in equal measure during her lifetime. Yet the *Evita* lyric that Zegler tells me resonated with her the most is the one that goes: ‘I was stuck in the right place at the perfect time / Filled a gap, I was lucky / But one thing I’ll say for me / No one else can fill it like I can.’ For while the play came along at just the right moment, who else would have looked so at ease in a role previously embodied by Elaine Paige, Patti LuPone and Madonna? ‘So, regardless of what women go through in the public eye, they’re there for a reason, and no one else can fill the gap that would be there if they weren’t,’ concludes Zegler.

Performing night after night in a role that required her to be on stage – indoors or outdoors – for almost every minute of the

Cotton dress, from a selection, ERDEM. Leather loafers, £490, GRENSON. Platinum and diamond necklace; matching ring (bottom), both from a selection; white gold and diamond ring, £10,800, all TIFFANY & CO





Silk chiffon dress,
from a selection, DIOR.
Platinum, gold and
diamond necklace;
platinum and diamond
ring, both from a selection,
TIFFANY & CO

Embroidered dress,
from a selection,
CAROLINA HERRERA.
Platinum, gold and
diamond necklace, from a
selection, TIFFANY & CO.
Suede heels, £595,
JENNIFER CHAMANDI

‘EVERYBODY DESERVES TO UNDERSTAND WHAT’S GOING ON IN THEIR OWN MIND AND HEART’

two-hour run time (‘It was a marathon!’) required superhuman energy and a correspondingly rigorous regime. ‘I lived like a nun,’ she says with a wince. ‘I got crazy about it, but I’d steam constantly and have a humidifier on at night, because the voice is just such a fickle muscle. And I only had alcohol maybe once every two weeks – just one extra-dirty vodka martini after the Saturday-evening shows.’ So, it has been a relief for Zegler to take a break from theatre for a few months, while she has instead been busy working with Marisa Tomei on the comedy-drama *She Gets It From Me*, in which she plays a bride-to-be searching for her birth mother – one of four films she has in the pipeline for the year ahead. ‘It’s my first time working with a woman director [the German filmmaker Julia von Heinz], which I’m thrilled about,’ she says.

Nothing will keep her away from the stage for long, however: this month, she returns to the Palladium for *The Last Five Years*, a musical two-hander about a couple poised to separate after a five-year relationship, in which Zegler’s character Cathy’s story is told backwards, and that of her husband Jamie (played by the Tony award-winning actor Ben Platt) is chronological. It’s an intimate, deeply affecting production in which anyone who has ever been through a break-up will recognise something of their own experience. ‘Cathy was my dream role when I was 16, but I had never experienced heartbreak then. Now I have, and that’s just what it means to be alive,’ says Zegler, who is currently single, having reportedly broken up from the dancer (and *Evita* cast member) Nathan Louis-Fernand earlier this year. ‘I’ll be bringing that lived experience of disappointment, together with the acknowledgement that doing it anyway is where the love story lives, and where the drama lives.’

For now, Zegler is quite happy for her own life to be drama-free. For company, she has her beloved goldendoodle Lenny, who may be even more delighted than she is to be back in the

Palladium. ‘He was the best backstage dog on *Evita* – everybody loved that boy,’ she says, laughing. ‘He even memorised the score, so when he heard ‘A New Argentina’, he’d know that Act One was ending and he’d sit up and wait for me at the door!’ She is looking forward to embracing London life again – ‘walks on Primrose Hill, a roast by night, maybe a cocktail to finish off’ – and to seeing many of her theatre friends performing on stage. And while she doesn’t deny that the more tumultuous moments of the past year have left her with some scars, she has worked through them methodically with a therapist – something she has no qualms about sharing publicly. ‘It’s been helpful for a lot of reasons, and it’s how I’m able to show up every day,’ she says. ‘I long for a time when it’s not taboo to talk about and explore in a way that is universal and accessible.’ Mental health, she adds, should not be a privilege of the wealthy few ‘because everybody deserves to understand what’s going on in their own mind and heart’.

Indeed, Zegler is very conscious of the fortunate position she is in, thanks to some astute commercial choices. ‘I made smart decisions by doing major franchises and whatever came my way,’ she says. ‘I could have gone in the arthouse direction and maybe I’d have got more critical acclaim earlier on but, ultimately, freedom is a great choice. I’ve picked things that gave me the financial stability to do independent movies and 12 weeks of London theatre.’ For all her success, she still has moments when she can’t quite believe how far she has come. ‘I had a missed call from Lin-Manuel Miranda the other day – I just know 12-year-old me would have died for that,’ she says. ‘And Andrew Lloyd Webber’s my pen pal. He doesn’t have a phone, so he emails...’

All that, and still just 24 – Rachel Zegler may call herself ‘a zygote’, but the world is eagerly watching her grow. *‘The Last Five Years’ is at the London Palladium (lwttheatres.co.uk) from 24 to 29 March.* □



Sheer dress, £6,938,
GIVENCHY BY SARAH
BURTON. Mesh heels, £635,
AQUAZZURA. Gold,
platinum and diamond
earrings; matching
necklace; gold and
diamond bracelet, all from
a selection, TIFFANY & CO.
Hair by Ward Stegerhoek
at Home Agency. Make-up
by Francelle Daly at Bryant
Artists. Manicure by Mo Qin
at the Wall Group. Stylist's
assistants: Cassy Meier
and Hadya Tuofiq. Set
design by Jack Flanagan
at Streeters. Production:
Frank Decaro. Tailoring:
Jacqui Bennett

THE BRIGHT STUFF

TAP INTO THE BOLD,
OPTIMISTIC ENERGY
OF SPRING WITH
ARTFUL LOOKS IN
A PRIMARY COLOUR
PALETTE OF SCARLET,
ROYAL BLUE AND
VIBRANT YELLOW

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK MADIGAN HECK
STYLED BY MIRANDA ALMOND



Viscose dress, about
£5,620; brass earrings,
about £770; leather
mules, about £1,730,
all GIVENCHY BY
SARAH BURTON

Fringed top,
from a selection,
BOTTEGA VENETA





Silk dress, £2,165,
FERRAGAMO.
Tulle and chiffon
headpiece, £2,550,
STEPHEN JONES
MILLINERY



Shearling coat, from
a selection, GUCCI

ERIK MADIGAN HECK



Satin dress, £3,000, RALPH
LAUREN COLLECTION

Taffeta dress, about £5,120, CAROLINA HERRERA







Cashmere and silk dress,
from a selection, LOEWE

ERIK MADIGAN HECK

Raffia dress,
from a selection,
STELLA McCARTNEY





Cotton dress, £4,050,
PRADA. Leather gloves,
£574, PAULA ROWAN



Lamb-skin T-shirt;
wool and feather
skirt, both from a
selection, BALENCIAGA

ERIK MADIGAN HECK



Silk top, £2,250; matching skirt, £1,100, both FENDI





Silk and lace top,
£10,730; wool and silk
trousers, £2,780; silk
and cotton hat, from a
selection, all DIOR

Lamb-skin bustier;
matching trousers,
both from a selection,
HERMÈS. Faux-leather
heels, £650, STELLA
MCCARTNEY

Organza coat, £4,450;
silk trousers, £1,000, both
GIORGIO ARMANI





Lamb-skin top, £3,310; knit skirt, £3,310, both ALAÏA. Feather hat, £795, CARRIE JENKINSON. Hair by Jordan Robertson at Premier Hair and Make-up. Make-up by Andrew Gallimore. Stylist's assistant: Hadya Tuofiq. Set design: Charlotte Lawton at Patricia McMahon. Set assistant: Aaron Vernon. Model: Roos Abels at the Milk Collective

ERIK MADIGAN HECK



This page: shearling coat, from a selection; leather heels, £930, both GUCCI.
Opposite: cotton jacket; silk and cotton hat, both from a selection; gabardine skirt, £4,000, all DIOR

Photographs by
ANYA
HOLDSTOCK
Styled by
SOPHIE
VAN DER WELLE

BUSINESS & PLEASURE

The new-season mood treads a fine line between serious and sensual – mix structured tailoring with soft-focus pastels, florals and delicate lace for the best of both worlds



Leather coat;
technical-fabric top,
both from a selection,
JIL SANDER



Silk dress, £1,390, VICTORIA
BECKHAM. Resin earrings,
£225, COMPLETEDWORKS



Wool jacket, £1,490; matching trousers, £750, both STELLA McCARTNEY. Silver earrings, about £375; silver and onyx necklace, about £745, both AGMES

Taffeta dress, about
£1,390; cotton and silk bra,
about £370; cupro capri
trousers, about £520;
leather mules, about £830,
all MAGDA BUTRYM





Silk dress, from a selection,
LOUIS VUITTON. Leather
sandals, £341, KALDA

Quilted top, £795; organza skirt, £475; satin and suede trainers, £550, all SIMONE ROCHA





Leather coat, £7,300; poplin shirt, £920; matching shorts, £510; leather gloves, £990; canvas heels, £1,330, all PRADA



Floral body, £249,
YUHAN WANG. White gold
and diamond earrings,
£7,700, TIFFANY & CO.
Lace tights, £34, FALKE



Feather dress, from
a selection, FFORME.
Sunglasses, £270,
SAINT LAURENT BY
ANTHONY VACCARELLO

Fringed cotton top, £4,390,
BALENCIAGA. Gold and
diamond ring, £7,025,
TIFFANY & CO. Mesh heels,
£595, NEOUS. Body,
stylist's own





Cotton trench-coat,
£3,050; silk dress, £2,080;
cupro leggings, £430;
leather heels, £1,040,
all MAISON MARGIELA

Cloqué apron, £1,930;
poplin dress, £1,730;
mohair trousers,
£1,290, all MIU MIU





Cotton trench-coat,
£2,230, CHLOÉ



Leather dress, £3,670, TOD'S. Silver ear cuff, £110, OTIUMBERG. Silver-plated brass bangle, £325, DINOSAUR DESIGNS

Leather dress,
£4,312, GIVENCHY
BY SARAH BURTON.
Silver earrings, £135,
SHAUN LEANE



Cotton harness top,
£700; denim dress, from
a selection; leather clutch,
£1,490; suede sandals,
£1,150, all McQUEEN.
Hair by Tomi Roppongi
at Julian Watson Agency,
using Hair by Sam
McKnight. Make-up by
Adele Sanderson, using
Chanel Denim Collection
and No 1 de Chanel
Body Serum-In-Mist.
Manicure by Emma
Welsh, using Chanel.
Stylist's assistant:
Olivia Sandford-Wilson.
Set design: Paula
Salinas-Arnau. Model:
Nadine Kirilova at
Tess Management





SOFT POWER

Relaxed, feminine tailoring
and deliciously draped shapes
in a harmonious palette of
neutrals offer a modern take on
the smart-casual dress code

Photographs by
*AGATA
POSPIESZYNSKA*

Styled by
*CHARLIE
HARRINGTON*

Silk top with lace
collar, from a
selection; wool and
silk trousers, £2,770;
tartan sandals (just
seen), £2,300,
all DIOR



Cotton and linen
blend jacket, £2,005;
matching trousers.
£695; herringbone
shirt, £775,
all FERRAGAMO.
Gold-plated brass
earrings, about £215,
ALEXIS BITTAR



Taffeta coat; wool top; taffeta and lace skirt; poplin shorts (just seen); leather heels, all from a selection, PRADA

AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA



Linen jacket, £2,650; matching trousers, £1,150; lace bra, £375; cotton shorts, £550, all DOLCE & GABBANA.
Gold and pearl earrings, £235, COMPLETEDWORKS



Twill top with bow, £1,400; matching skirt, £1,600; metal earrings, £575; matching necklace, £975; silver belt, £450; twill and gold metallic boots, £1,720, all GUCCI



Yarn-blend top,
£200; jersey skirt,
£1,550; leather
and elastic belt,
£680, all MAX MARA.
Metal and strass
earrings, from a
selection, CHANEL

AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA



Wool coat, £4,800;
matching trousers,
£4,200, both
LOUIS VUITTON



Cotton jacket, £2,650;
matching polo shirt,
£1,190; matching skirt,
£1,450, all FENDI.
Gold-plated brass and
pearl earrings, £235,
COMPLETEDWORKS



Leather trench-coat; metal and strass earrings, both from a selection, CHANEL

AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA




Wool jacket; linen-mix dress, both from a selection; leather heels, £1,050, all CELINE

Wool blazer, about
£2,370; silk bra, about
£1,320; wool trousers,
about £1,275; brass
earrings, about £835;
leather heels, about
£920, all GIVENCHY
BY SARAH BURTON





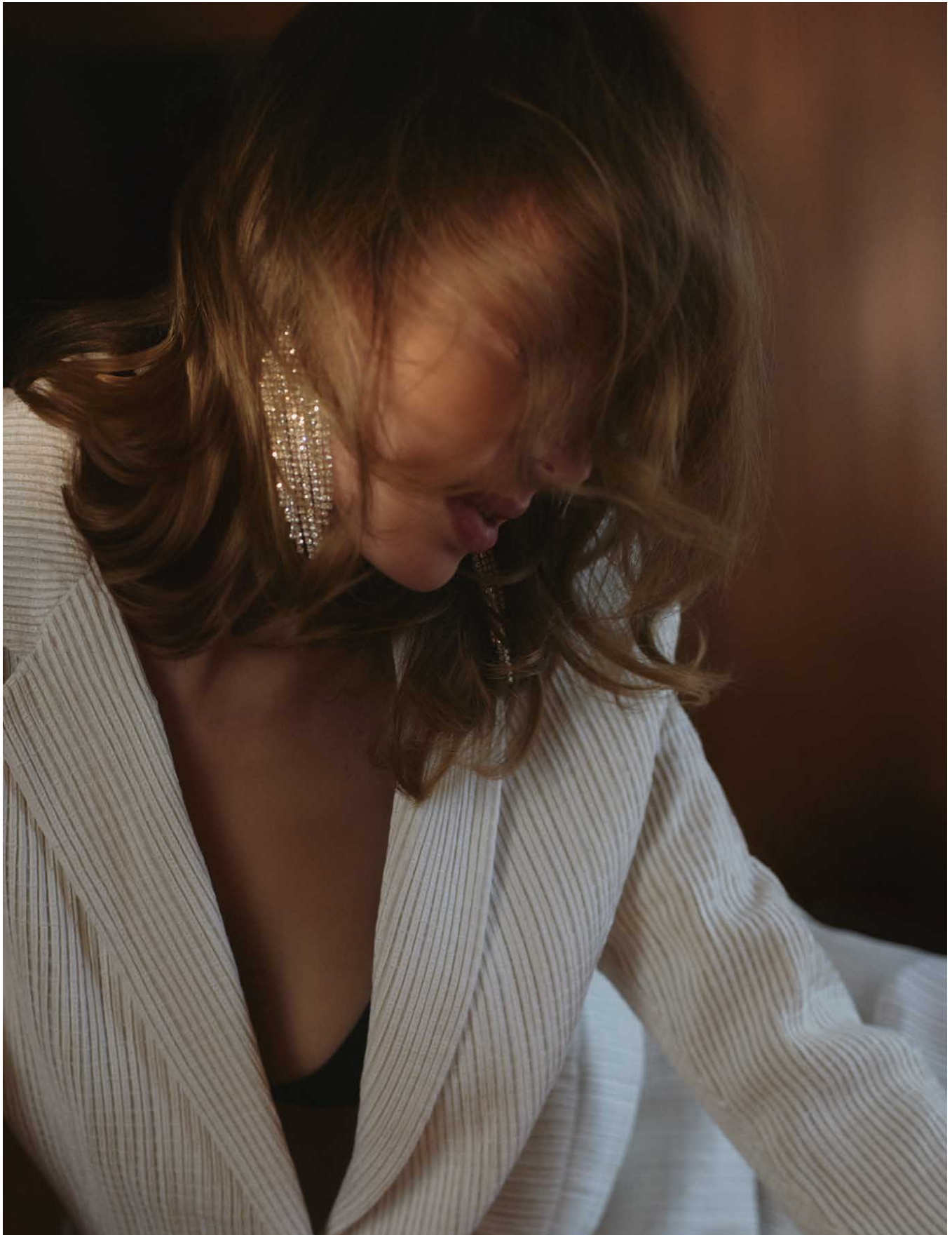


Jersey top, £430;
leather skirt, £5,690;
gold and brass
bracelet, £545; leather
heels, £1,150, all
CHLOÉ. Silver-plated
crystal earrings, £95,
SUSAN CAPLAN

AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA

Jersey shirt with
satin bow, £3,050;
jersey trousers,
£7,600; leather
derbies, £1,150,
all DIOR





Linen blazer, £6,400; matching shirt, £300, both RALPH LAUREN COLLECTION. Silver earrings, £95, SUSAN CAPLAN

AGATA POSPIESZYNSKA



Mohair coat; silk shirt with necktie; wool trousers; silver earrings; leather bag; matching belt, all from a selection, BOTTEGA VENETA



Wool dress; satin sandals, both from a selection, BALENCIAGA. Hair by Declan Sheils at Premier Hair and Make-up. Make-up by Natsumi Narita, using Chanel Denim Collection and No 1 de Chanel Body Serum-In-Mist. Stylist's assistant: Jess Miller. Model: Lili Sumner at Next





Operation Majesty

A new exhibition lifts the veil on Queen Elizabeth II's lifelong campaign to project power and to protect the Royal Family through sartorial cyphers. Ahead of its opening, *Justine Picardie* decodes the military messaging of her wartime garb, and reveals the influence of the enigmatic spymaster who crafted some of her most meaningful attire

Queen Elizabeth II in her Coronation gown by Norman Hartnell, shot by Cecil Beaton in 1953



This page, clockwise from top: Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth II, wearing a diamond brooch symbolising the Grenadier Guards, photographed by Cecil Beaton in 1942. Aged eight, in an Edward Molyneux dress for the wedding of her uncle. Wearing her mother's Norman Hartnell gown in 1945, also photographed by Beaton. Opposite, from top: with her parents and sister on the balcony of Buckingham Palace on VE Day. In a uniform tailored by Bernard Wetherill for Trooping the Colour in 1947



‘I have to be seen to be believed.’ So said Queen Elizabeth II, and her famous adage echoed in my mind as I embarked on writing my new book *Fashioning the Crown*, which explores how the visual impact of her sartorial choices – and those of her parents and grandparents before her – were key to safeguarding the monarchy in a tumultuous era of international conflicts and crises at home. Given the current troubles facing the Royal Family, it seems all the more timely that a new exhibition of her clothes (‘Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style’) should be opening at the King’s Gallery at Buckingham Palace on 10 April, 100 years after her birth.

I was fortunate to have met the Queen on a number of occasions, both in public and in private, and was always awestruck by her appearance, whether she was dazzling in an array of diamond jewellery and an exquisitely embroidered silver evening gown or dressed down in her traditional countrywoman’s attire of a tartan skirt, Scottish woollens and sturdy, brown-leather brogues. But it was not until I happened to find myself alone with the Queen, after lunch in a remote mountain bothy on the Balmoral estate, that I managed to pluck up the courage to ask her about one of her former couturiers, Sir Hardy Amies. He had started designing for her when she was still Princess Elizabeth, not long after he established his business in 1946, and was thus the first designer she had chosen for herself. The elegant restraint of his tailoring and sophisticated colour palette was in marked contrast to the ornate romanticism of her mother’s favourite dressmaker Norman Hartnell (who, nevertheless, continued to make highly embellished, neo-Victorian creations for the young princess, notably her wedding gown in 1947). Aside from Amies’ expertise in fashion, what also intrigued me was his work during World War II as a senior intelligence officer for the Special Operations Executive, where he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and played a key role in the undercover operations of the Belgian Resistance.

Having mentioned to the Queen that I had encountered Amies several times before his death in 2003, I wondered whether she had any insights regarding his past clandestine operations. ‘Ah yes,

those rumours that he was very good at garrotting Nazis,' said the Queen, with a quizzically raised eyebrow. 'Of course, it was an excellent cover for a spy, to be a couturier,' she added: a comment that lodged in my mind, as if offering a clue to what might lie beneath her enigmatic façade.

Following the Queen's death in September 2022, I requested to see the most significant garments designed for her, which have now been catalogued and stored with the rest of her extensive wardrobe, as part of the Royal Archives at Windsor. About 200 of these items are to be displayed in the forthcoming exhibition at Buckingham Palace, which will highlight a pair of Hartnell's masterpieces – the Queen's fairy-tale white-satin wedding dress and 1953 Coronation gown, embroidered in gold thread with the motifs of the Commonwealth. There is also a majestic grey-satin dress, designed by Amies, that is embellished with pearls and embroidered in a pattern of golden leaves, which she wore to dinner with President Eisenhower during the State Visit to the United States in October 1957.

Over the course of a number of visits to an anonymous-looking warehouse in Windsor Great Park, I was able to study many of the remarkable pieces of clothing that spanned the Queen's long life. In doing so, I never lost my sense of awe, nor the awareness that the Queen had been educated to believe in the concept of monarchy as described in 1867 by Walter Bagehot in his canonical book *The English Constitution*: 'Above all things our royalty is to be revered, and if you begin to poke about it you cannot reverence it. . . Its mystery is its life. We must not let in daylight upon magic.'

At the same time, I came to understand that the Queen's iconic wardrobe survives as material evidence of Royal history; or as Caroline de Guitaut, the exhibition curator and Surveyor of the King's Works of Art, observes: 'The wardrobe does the talking.' Unlike her distant ancestors, the Queen was not shielded from enemies by suits of armour, but she had nevertheless lived through the rise of fascism, the threat of Nazi invasion and the mortal dangers of World War II when, in her father's words, 'the whole fabric' of the monarchy was in danger of being torn apart. As such, she came to be protected by her own distinctive uniforms – some overtly military, others relaying coded messages



or offering a form of disguise, yet all integral to her identity. The Queen's clothes thereby represent an intricate pattern of soft power, as well as a tangible reminder of her personal life beyond that of a legendary figurehead on the world stage.

From infancy onwards, Princess Elizabeth was the subject of intense press interest, much of which focused on her attire. Even before her birth, journalists were sharing the news that her grandmother Queen Mary had personally sewn some of the baby's layette; soon afterwards came the reports that her mother the Duchess of York preferred to see infants in frilly cotton rather than wool. By the age of three, the little princess was credited as being 'a definite leader of fashion' who had started 'the vogue for yellow'; at eight, she appeared as a couture-clad bridesmaid wearing an exquisite tulle dress by Edward Molyneux (which will feature in the exhibition) for one of the most stylish weddings of the decade, when her uncle Prince George,

the Duke of Kent, married his second cousin Princess Marina. The following year, in 1935, Elizabeth and her younger sister Margaret were dressed in matching pale-pink bridesmaid frocks designed by Hartnell for another high-profile royal wedding: that of their uncle Prince Henry, the Duke of Gloucester, to Princess Alice.

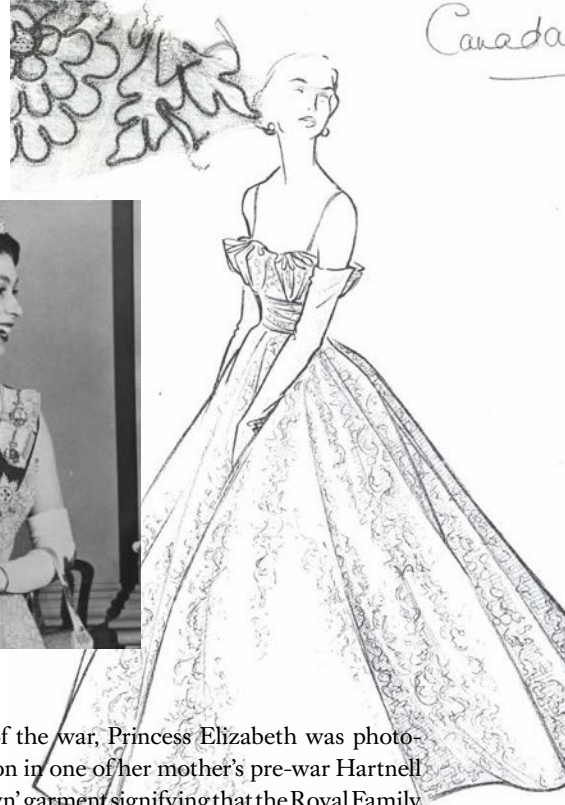
Hartnell rose to fame as the couturier of choice for the princesses' mother, who became Queen Consort after the abdication of Edward VIII in 1936. And with the outbreak of war, she continued to wear pastel Hartnell ensembles, rather than military attire, unlike her husband George VI, who remained in uniform throughout World War II. It was in these instantly recognisable outfits that the Royal couple appeared together when Buckingham Palace was bombed in September 1940 – as it would be nine times during the Blitz – prompting Queen Elizabeth to say that she was glad the Palace had been hit because it meant that she could 'look the East End in the face'.

'Ah yes, those rumours that [Hardy Amies] was very good at garrotting Nazis...'





Princess Elizabeth on her wedding day in 1947 in a Norman Hartnell gown. Near right: wearing a Hardy Amies gown in Canada in 1951. Far right: Amies' sketch for the dress



The Queen with President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his wife Mamie, and Prince Philip, at the White House in 1957

'She absolutely knew what the right thing was for her to wear on any given occasion'



Photographed by Cecil Beaton in a Hardy Amies gown in 1968

Towards the end of the war, Princess Elizabeth was photographed by Cecil Beaton in one of her mother's pre-war Hartnell gowns, a 'hand-me-down' garment signifying that the Royal Family were following the same rules of rationing and austerity as the rest of the country. But Beaton also depicted the Princess in more soldierly attire: in 1942, she was appointed Colonel of the Grenadier Guards and, on her 16th birthday in April that year, she undertook her first official public engagement when she inspected the regiment at Windsor Castle. Her new military role was acknowledged

in Beaton's portrait, thanks to the diamond brooch in the form of the regimental cypher that she had received as a birthday gift, and the badge on her army-style cap, teamed with the same plain utility jacket and wool skirt that she wore in the majority of her wartime portraits. This modest yet crucial outfit will be on view in the exhibition, as will the uniform she donned after volunteering as a driver and motor mechanic in the Auxiliary Territorial Service in April 1945, which she wore both on the balcony of Buckingham Palace on VE Day and when she mingled with the celebrating crowds later that night on the streets of London, her khakis allowing her to hide in plain sight. Hence the remark by her cousin

Margaret Rhodes, who accompanied Elizabeth on this unprecedented outing, that the Princess had enjoyed 'a unique burst of personal freedom; a Cinderella moment in reverse', in which the ATS uniform provided the means to be 'ordinary and unknown'.

Within weeks of VE Day, Clement Attlee's Labour government came to power in a landslide victory, introducing the radical reforms that led to the creation of the National Health Service, the establishment of the welfare state and the nationalisation of key industries. In these circumstances, the Royal Family – and Princess Elizabeth in particular – had to be seen to evolve from a wartime symbol of a brave and embattled Britain into one that befitted a post-war era of change. Hence her decision to commission Amies for her first overseas tour of Canada and the United States, undertaken with her husband Prince Philip in 1951; for as de Guitaut explains: 'She wasn't dissociated from her own self-presentation... She absolutely knew what the right thing was for her to wear on any

given occasion and established her own, very distinctive style at a young age.' Amies, too, grasped from the beginning that she would need a wardrobe in which every aspect had been considered in advance, so that nothing looked ill-judged or incongruous. 'How proud I am that I have been, and still am, able to serve the Queen by making dresses for her,' he wrote in his memoir in 1954, adding that, 'she is prepared to take every care to appear beautifully and appropriately dressed, but having done so, was free to get on with her work. The elegance achieved is therefore completely effortless.

'I wanted to get away from the cliché of the pale-blue dress,' Amies continued, in relation to his earliest designs for Princess Elizabeth, while acknowledging that 'blue was obviously going to be the Princess's great colour, dictated by those oversized blue eyes. So our first success with Her Royal Highness was a dress and coat in heavy silk... The colour was truly thunder-blue... and the coat was cut on what is appropriately known as a "princess line": that is to say, there is no seam at the waist, the seams flowing from the shoulder to the bottom of the skirt... which then moved exceptionally gracefully.'

In general, Amies' aesthetic tended to be understated, with a discipline that arose from his own experiences in wartime, which had not only taught him the vital attention to detail that a secret agent needed to operate undercover, but also educated him in the subtle variations in military regalia. It is in this context that his rigorous designs stand the test of time, especially when viewed beside another of the most memorable outfits in the exhibition: a bespoke uniform made by the equestrian tailor Bernard Weatherill, in which Princess Elizabeth accompanied her father on horseback, For Free Magazines Check Soft. ac in her role as Colonel of the Grenadier Guards, at the Trooping the Colour in June 1947. No sequined ballgown could ever outshine the strength, confidence and patriotism she manifested that day and, over the many years to come, when she rode with pride and dignity at the head of her Guards.

As the Queen, she continued to dress tactically – and always in British textiles and designers – until the end of her life, using colour and jewellery to express her expertise in diplomacy and statecraft. And her wardrobe lives on to tell a tale that future generations may learn from, at a time when the monarchy is reshaping itself, as it so often has before, to face the challenges that lie ahead. *Fashioning the Crown* by Justine Picardie (£25, Faber) is out now. *Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style* opens on 10 April; for tickets, visit rct.uk. □



Greeting crowds celebrating her Silver Jubilee in 1977, wearing Hardy Amies



HARDY AMIES

Cloak and dagger

Hardy Amies was born in London in 1909, the son of a seamstress for an establishment in Mayfair that supplied the court. He wrote in his memoir: 'I like to think that I was almost born on the steps of a court dressmaker.' It was thanks in part to his mother's contacts that in 1934 he started working for Lachasse, a London couture house renowned for its tailored suits. He was already fluent in French and German, having spent several years studying languages and working in Europe. His linguistic skills made him a natural choice for the Intelligence Corps when war broke out in 1939, although he managed to combine his full-time work as a military officer with his continuing commitment to couture. In 1941, Amies became a founder member, with Norman Hartnell, of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers, in which role he contributed to the fashion exports that raised vital funds for the war effort, at the same time as rising through the Special Operations Executive. Amies' training involved the use of explosives and weaponry, parachuting and silent killing – all of which were to prove key to his involvement in Operation Ratweek, a plan to kill Nazi collaborators, and to his success in sustaining the Belgian Resistance.

One of Amies' rare acknowledgements of his espionage activities appeared in his memoir, when he wrote that 'the severe lessons in diplomacy' would prove vital in his determination to establish a couture house after he returned to civilian life. By setting up his premises on Savile Row – the traditional home of gentlemen's tailoring – Amies signalled that he was proposing something very different from Hartnell's sequined crinolines, which had been worn to great effect by Queen Elizabeth after the coronation of her husband George VI in 1937. In the decades that followed, his work for her daughter Queen Elizabeth II remained as impeccable as his unwavering discretion as a spy.

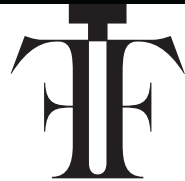
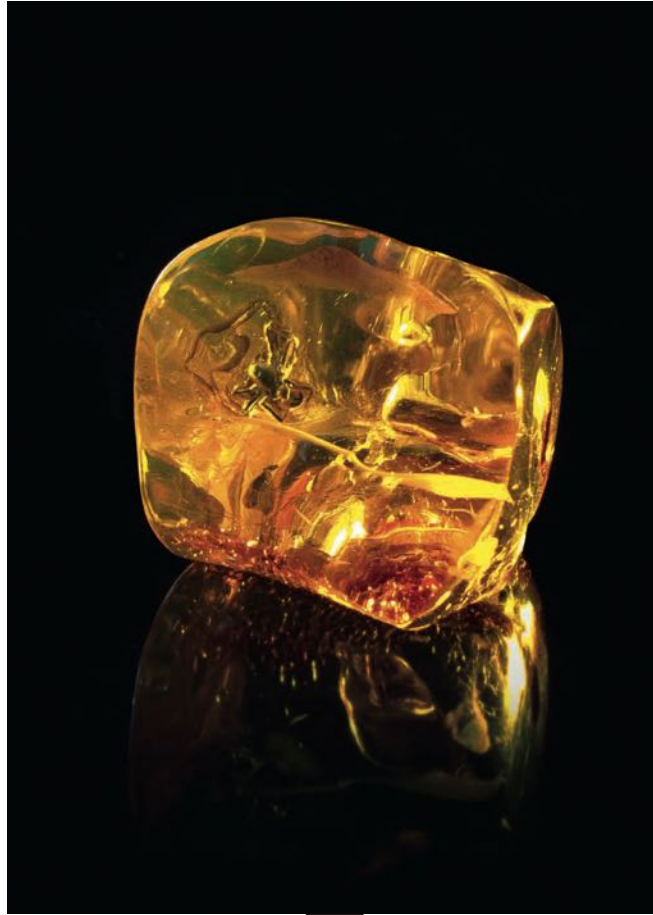


The Hardy Amies premises on Savile Row in 1971. Top: the designer in 1950

Explore the families at fragrancefoundation.org.uk
Fragrance lasts

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.



THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

BAZAAR

— beauty —

EDITED BY
KATY YOUNG

Fresh as a daisy

The results are in: *Bazaar* awards the very best scents for 2026.

Plus: the Jagger sisters share their beauty secrets; Francis Kurkdjian pays a fragrant tribute to Rihanna; and why 'brain massages' are the new meditation

SPRITZ AWAY

The annual *Fragrance Awards* return, featuring *Bazaar's* favourite scents that offer both sensuality and staying power

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LILY PICHON FLANNERY



BEST WOODY
Bottega Veneta
Almost Dawn parfum,
£380 for 100ml



THE MODERN CLASSICS

From fresh innovations to thrilling revivals, these are the new launches set to become enduring favourites. Expect reimaged versions of much-loved ingredients, including musk and vanilla – perfect for a subtly sweet start to spring.



BEST LEATHER
Balenciaga Extra parfum,
£230 for 100ml

'With its sophisticated notes of leather, herbs and pink pepper, Balenciaga Extra – captured in a beautiful vintage-inspired flacon – is my new favourite scent'

LYDIASLATER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



BEST LONGEVITY
Balmain Carbone
eau de parfum,
£145 for 50ml



BEST FIG

Tom Ford Figue Erotische eau de parfum, £290 for 50ml

BEST MUSK

Narciso Rodriguez Pure Musc Blanc eau de parfum intense, £108 for 50ml

BEST CITRUS

Acqua di Parma
Buongiorno eau
de parfum, £146
for 50ml



BEST GREEN FLORAL

Amouage
Existence eau
de parfum,
£320 for 100ml



BEST FRANKINCENSE
Dior Bois D'Argent esprit de parfum,
£380 for 80ml

'This cocooning, opulent
scent of honeyed,
resinous woods balanced
with powdery iris always
invites compliments'

MEDINA AZALDIN
BEAUTY EDITOR



BEST AMBER

Louis Vuitton Ambre
Levant Parfum,
£320 for 100ml



BEST OUD

Maison Francis
Kurkdjian Oud Velvet
Mood extrait de
parfum, £345 for 70ml

BEST CHYPRE
Hermès Barèmia eau de parfum intense, £150 for 100ml



BEST GOURMAND

Carolina Herrera
Good Girl eau
de parfum, £139
for 100ml



THE SHOW-STOPPERS

There will always be room for restrained, gentle spritzes, but the appeal of statement scents remains strong. 'There's a real appetite for "sexed-up icons", with brands releasing higher concentrations of their hero products, known as extraits,' says Natalie Guselli, Liberty London's head of beauty. Composed of opulent ingredients such as oud and ambers, these are the fragrances that will turn heads and spark compliments.

THE BEST OF BRITISH

Home-grown fragrance brands are a force to be reckoned with, especially with many now offering a bespoke approach to perfume shopping through private appointments. 'People want expertise, time and a beautifully guided discovery process,' says Guselli. 'Choosing a scent in a private suite with a specialist feels luxurious and personal, and that's what shoppers are gravitating towards.'

BEST ECO-CONSCIOUS
Ffern Spring 26 eau de parfum, £39 for 30ml



BEST FLORAL
Perfumer H
Rose With
Insect eau de
parfum, £160
for 50ml



BEST FRUITY
Lbty Vine Thief eau de parfum,
£235 for 100ml



BEST FRESH
Penhaligon's Daphne Bouquet eau de
parfum, £175 for 100ml

'Picture a vibrant, bright bouquet of daphne flowers and fresh green notes, brought together with a sharp, joyful zest'

KATIE WITHINGTON
BEAUTY WRITER

BEST POWDERY
Vivienne
Westwood
Boudoir eau de
parfum,
£105 for 50ml



BEST SMOKY
Jo Malone Amber Labdanum Cologne Intense, £164 for 100ml





BEST FOR EVENING
Giorgio Armani Si Parfum, £153 for 100ml



BEST AQUATIC
The Merchant of Venice Cyprus Shell eau de parfum, £150 for 100ml

'Lively rose blended with earthy iris notes and a touch of salt makes for the most beguiling scent of the year'

KATY YOUNG
BEAUTY DIRECTOR



BEST JASMINE
Chloé Atelier des Fleurs Jasminum Sambac eau de parfum, £115 for 50ml



BEST FOR HOLIDAYS
Lancôme La Vie Est Belle Vanilla Nude, £130 for 100ml

THE FLORALS

One of the largest categories, and certainly the most versatile, flower-based scents suit all tastes and occasions, whether you favour an effervescent take on geraniums or an airy interpretation of jasmynes.



BEST ROSE
Guerlain Santal Pao Rosa eau de parfum, £300 for 100ml



BEST MOOD-BOOSTER
Boss the Scent For Here eau de parfum, £133 for 100ml



BEST FOR DAYTIME
Chance Eau Splendide eau de parfum, £149 for 100ml

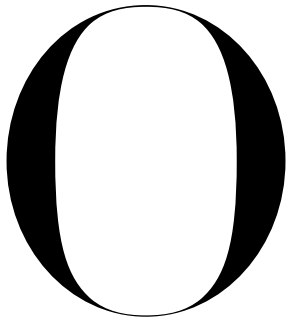


BEST SPICY
Gucci Guilty Absolu de Parfum Pour Femme, £128 for 60ml



S I S T E R A C T

Georgia May and Lizzy Jagger talk to *Medina Azaldin* about their life in fragrance, their favourite treatment spaces and why family comes first



On a sunny afternoon at Petersham Nurseries, not far from their family home in Richmond, Georgia May and Lizzy Jagger are in high spirits, chatting cheerfully and routinely finishing each other's sentences. The close-knit sisters, who have seven years between them, were recently named ambassadors for Jo Malone London and have spent the day shooting content for the brand's new Sisterhood campaign celebrating its English Pear collection – one of many modelling assignments they have taken on as a double act over the years.

It is difficult to name another pair of sisters who are so synonymous with modern British beauty. Georgia May, with her signature red lip and gap-toothed smile, popularised the now iconic strapline 'Get the London Look' for Rimmel cosmetics back in 2009, while her older sister has been a catwalk favourite at Vivienne Westwood, Sonia Rykiel and Tommy Hilfiger. For Lizzy, who has recently relocated to the UK after living in LA for some years, the British aesthetic is about 'rosy cheeks, rosy lips, the countryside – that dreamy feel', while Georgia May adds: 'At the opposite end of the spectrum, I think of punk, Vivienne Westwood and rock 'n' roll.'

As the children of Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall, Georgia May and Lizzy grew up travelling the world, finding beauty inspiration along the way. 'Whenever we stayed in hotels on our father's tour, there was always a spa and we would look at the products they had,' recalls Lizzy. 'We'd go into our mum's bathroom and try her things, too.' Georgia May remembers one in particular: 'She had the big bottle of Thierry Mugler's Angel perfume in the shape of a star.'

Today, Hall's signature scent is Robert Piguet's Fracas, a heady, white floral composition, while her daughters favour gentler blends. Georgia May says she gravitates towards the breezy freshness of Jo Malone London's English Pear and Freesia ('I spray myself a bunch of times and it is not overpowering'), while Lizzy is more partial to Jo Malone London's English Pear and Sweet Pea for daytime and the smokier notes found in the same brand's

Velvet Rose & Oud Cologne Intense for after-hours. 'I sometimes prefer something a bit stronger, woodier and muskier, like the leather and tobacco you get in men's perfumes,' she says.

Beyond sharing a passion for fine fragrances, both sisters are loyal to the Korean spas in Los Angeles, specifically Olympic Spa. 'There is nothing comparable to it. You can eat on a heated jade floor and stay there the whole day with infrared saunas, clay heat rooms and red-light therapy,' says Georgia May. 'I'm already scheduling when I'm going back,' adds Lizzy. Closer to home, Georgia May likes the Akasha spa in London's Hotel Café Royal and frequents Pfeffer Sal and Teresa Tarmey for facials. For reducing the effects of sun damage, Lizzy heads to Marylebone's Laserlife Clinic.

With their matching bohemian waves and a penchant for statement lips, they are clearly each other's beauty muse. 'Georgia got me into pink eyeshadow,' Lizzy says, while she introduced Clé de Peau's concealer to her sister. Lizzy's early interest in organic skincare also influenced

'With matching bohemian waves, they are each other's beauty muse'

Georgia May's own skincare brand May Botanicals. 'Lizzy was the one pioneering that before it was cool, and introduced me to more natural make-up brands such as RMS. She was a big inspiration for my beauty journey.'

After years spent in front of the camera, the sisters are busy making their own mark beyond the modelling world, with Georgia May steadily building her beauty empire and Lizzy focusing on her activism work in the US (she has been a vocal advocate for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which would bring about equality between the sexes under the law). Despite their hectic schedules, they stay in touch through what Georgia May calls 'obsessive texting', as well as enjoying precious family time: they each have a son and enjoy meeting for walks with the children in Richmond Park. Truly, sisterhood at its most beautiful. □

JOIN THE CLUB

Your chance to become part of *Harper's Bazaar Privé*,
our growing community of visionary women



It has already been a busy and exciting year for *Harper's Bazaar's* membership club *Privé*. We came together in January for an energy-boosting wellness breakfast, then put our resolutions on pause for a decadent Burns Night supper. In February, members had exclusive access to the Baftas after-party, before convening in March for our International Women's Day gala dinner. Join now for access to all our upcoming events, featuring a night at the museum, a glamorous summer soirée and a special weekend away...

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BEAUTY MOODBOARD

The perfumer Francis Kurkdjian envisions a new era of floral fragrances with Dior J'adore Intense

It is rare for Dior's perfume-creation director Francis Kurkdjian to design a fragrance with a specific woman in mind; his compositions are often informed by evocative locations, memories and rituals. But he makes an exception for Rihanna, dedicating the new J'adore Intense to the pop-culture powerhouse and Dior ambassador (she has been the face of the original scent since 2024, but this is the first created in her honour). 'Rihanna conveys something about J'adore that we have not said before,' Kurkdjian says of the megastar, adding that it was her modern sensuality and authenticity that inspired the fragrance. 'There is a consistency about her – she is always at the top.' The resulting blend retains J'adore's luscious bouquet of flowers (featuring jasmine, rose, violet and ylang-ylang), but strengthens its jammy, creamy facets for a spritz that is as glamorous and dazzling as its muse – a departure from the soapy, shampoo-clean floral created in 1999. The blooms in J'adore Intense are amplified with a touch of vanilla that contributes to what Kurkdjian calls its 'voluptuous' character. In the spirit of modernity, the glass bottle is lighter to reduce its environmental impact.

While designed to capture Rihanna's arresting star quality, this is a fragrance for anyone with a confident outlook on life – and is surely destined to become a chart-topping hit.

Dior J'adore Intense parfum, £112 for 50ml.

MEDINA AZALDIN

Francis Kurkdjian



GILLIAN ANDERSON



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AGE PERFECT

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SMALLER THAN A PORE



SKIN FEELS FIRMER, RE-TIGHTENED.
DARK SPOTS ARE VISIBLY REDUCED.

WHAT KATY DOES

Our beauty director Katy Young reveals the secrets of her routine



Peace in a pod

Rituals is enticing busy shoppers into its new Oxford Street flagship store for 'brain massages' – which are less extreme than they sound. After entering your 'pod', you'll enjoy a 30-minute mix of meditative sounds, guided breathwork, LED light therapy and weightless beds to lull you into a better state of mind.



Dior Addict Rosy Glow EDP, £69 for 30ml

SCENTS AND SENSIBILITY

Inspired by its new Lip Glow Oils, Dior has created three deliciously sparkling Addict fragrances, based on iris, jasmine and rose notes.



L'Oréal Paris Hyaluron Lip Stain Serum, £12.99



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

START RIGHT

I choose my daily base in the same way some people choose their outfits. On white-T-shirt days, I love Clarins' new Double Serum for a glossy glow. In cooler weather, when we layer up, I rely on Estée Lauder's recently updated Double Wear; it lasts beautifully.



Clarins Double Serum, £92 for 50ml



Medik8 Niacinamide Peptides, £49



Aramore Nad+ Cell Energizing Treatment, £130



Dermalogica Phyto Nature E2, £148

On the bright side

To create the ultimate spring gleam, boost your routine with ingredients that speed up healthy skin-cell turnover. My edit includes Medik8 Niacinamide Peptides for clarity, Aramore Nad+ Cell Energizing Treatment to recharge and Dermalogica's Phyto Nature E2 to renew.

Tinted love

For big, bright colour commitment, I opt for lip stains – my latest obsession is L'Oréal's Berry Jolie shade.



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BAZAAR

— e s c a p e —

EDITED BY
HELENA LEE

Scene change

Travel to the Italian lakes, where nature is the star of the show.

Plus: glorious group stays from Copenhagen to the Cotswolds; and Marisa Abela's guide to making the most of Malta

ESCAPE

This page, clockwise from right: Villa Sigurtà. Lake Garda. Villa Bettoni. A pasta-making class at Sigurtà. One of the villa's trompe l'oeil ceilings



Balcony scene

For *Helena Lee* and her troupe, a majestic palazzo near Verona sets the stage for a theatrical sojourn without a hint of tragedy





TURNING INTO THE DRIVEWAY AT VILLA SIGURTÀ, NOT 20 MILES FROM Verona, I thought this must be what Romeo felt when his eyes fell on Juliet: love at first sight. Before us was not simply a 10-bedroom villa, but a fully staffed Palladian palace with a vast 16th-century façade and a sky-high pediment. Our springtime four-night stay in the Veneto would be far from a conventional Easter getaway.

Our first dilemma occurred when we were asked which suite we would like: the Re Carlo Alberto, the Imperatori or the Maria Callas, perhaps? We were presented with an embarrassment of riches, as each *camera* was as storied as the next (of course Callas had stayed here with her Italian husband before she ran off with Aristotle Onassis). Our group of eight were spread throughout the villa: it took a good few minutes for my husband and me to walk from our suite (the Imperatori) through the Ambassadors' Room, the Theatre Room, the 'marine' Dining-Room and the Billiard-Room to the wing that held our children, who had en-suite bathrooms as well as a sitting area.

Originally a summer residence for the Maffeis, one of the most powerful families in northern Italy, the villa was built in 1649. It became the backdrop for many historical events and figures; Emperors Franz Joseph I and Napoleon III both spent time here and, in 1859, diplomats brokered the Treaty of Villafranca in the Ambassadors' Room, which led to the reunification of Italy.

Almost a century later, the villa and grounds were bought by the Milanese industrialist Giuseppe Sigurtà, who was friends with intellectuals including the penicillin pioneer Alexander Fleming. Under the Sigurtàs, who still own it, the villa has welcomed a constellation of visitors: the Prince of Wales – now King Charles III – King Constantine II and the aforementioned Maria Callas. Now, in the hands of Sigurtà's grandson Count Jose Antonio and through the travel specialist Tuscany Now & More, the residence – modernised with three swimming pools and a Technogym – is available for exclusive hire and is perfect for a special occasion with your nearest and dearest. A sojourn here is to be given a taste of living like European aristocracy in the good old days.

On our first encounter with the Count, his hair was dusty from excavating a centuries-old chapel on-site. It's just one example of his endless curiosity (during the pandemic, he also unearthed a 13th-century oven that he now wants to restore so it can be used to make pizza). An excellent raconteur with a deep knowledge of the

Over dinner, served by butlers in white uniforms, the Count regaled us with extraordinary stories

property and a penchant for bright colours, he took us on a tour while the children enjoyed an Easter-egg hunt; we walked across terrazzo floors past accents of purple crushed velvet, deep greens, pearl-coloured cushions, giant coral-hued sculptures and mirrored coffee tables that reflected the trompe l'oeil ceilings above. Later, over a dinner of tortellini and fillet steak with Russian salad, served by butlers in white uniforms with gold buttons in the Hunting Room (which is decorated with scenes of country pursuits), the Count regaled us in perfect English with extraordinary stories of his life as an aristocrat, an entrepreneur and a new father.

Over the following days, our group engaged in many activities, organised for us by Tuscany Now & More. The first was a motorboat ride on Lake Garda, during which we stopped off for a private tour of Villa Bettoni, a neoclassical lakeside palace that had been occupied by members of the Fascist party during World War II, and wandered through its orange and lemon groves. Lunch that day was at the gorgeous Locanda San Vigilio; the locals eyed us over their beers and Aperol spritzes on the jetty as we disembarked to dine on octopus and spaghetti with bottarga. Less than an hour's drive away is the Grotta di Fumane, one of the most important prehistoric archaeological sites in Europe, where both Neanderthals and the first homo sapiens lived around 50,000 years ago.

On another day, we spent the afternoon in fair Verona itself, for an injection of art and culture: a pilgrimage to Juliet's balcony, followed by a visit to the remarkable Palazzo Maffei – a special museum that houses more than 700 works and puts Veronese antiquities in conversation with works by Hokusai and Modigliani. One evening in Villa Sigurtà, the Fan Room (named for its display of Asian fans) became the setting for a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, brilliantly enacted by a troupe of three professional actors, while we enjoyed an aperitivo of the villa's spumante. We then had dinner at Alla Borsa, a local trattoria famous for the owner Nadia's handmade tortellini – something we tried our best to recreate the next day in a pasta-making class.

The stay was not just relaxing but enriching, too, and made unique through the presence of the Count himself. No wonder when it was time to go home, we felt parting was such sweet sorrow. *Villa Sigurtà* (tuscanynowandmore.com), from £30,093 a week for the 10-bedroom property. Stays are booked on a weekly basis; a one-week minimum stay applies. □



The Salone di Napoleone at Villa Sigurtà. Top: the author in Verona



BEST FOR HISTORY BUFFS: ANANTARA CONVENTO DI AMALFI, CAMPANIA, ITALY

This 13th-century Cistercian monastery first became a hotel in 1882, serving as a bougainvillea-adorned cliffside stop on many a Grand Tour in the years that followed. Its recent iteration as an Anantara property has seen the building beautifully preserved, with the peaceful cloisters still showcasing original frescoes, and rooms and suites set within the former monks' quarters – complete with vaulted ceilings and terracotta tiling. Today, the hotel brings its layered history to life through immersive experiences, from guided tours of the monastery and ancient breath-work lessons to mozzarella-making workshops that celebrate the area's culinary traditions.

BROOKE THEIS

Anantara Convento di Amalfi Grand Hotel (anantara.com), from about £1,090 a room a night, B&B.

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BEST FOR INTREPID EXPLORERS: SOUTHWEST ALENTEJO AND VICENTINE COAST NATURAL PARK, PORTUGAL

For those who prefer to have the hard work of holiday planning done for them, Original Travel's week-long Portuguese trip is a varied treat. It starts in the Vicentine Coast Natural Park in Alentejo, where you can frolic on the beaches or paddle-board on the Mira River, before embarking on an equestrian adventure. Later, head to Sagres for surfing in the Atlantic, before going to Cape St Vincent, the most south-western point in Europe. HELENA LEE

'A Portuguese Family Beach Adventure' from Original Travel (originaltravel.co.uk), from £1,800 a person for eight nights.



BEST FOR A CASUAL
GROUP TRIP: THE PIG,
BROCKENHURST, UK

At once welcoming, unstuffy and relaxing, the Pig in Brockenhurst is the epitome of low-key country-house hospitality, with its friendly staff, clubhouse atmosphere in the living spaces (perfect for pots of tea or G&Ts with your loved ones) and gently sloping lawns designed for leisurely strolls. But above all, the culinary offering is consistently fantastic, with ingredients from the hotel's own kitchen garden featuring on the 25-mile menu. HL

The Pig (thepighotel.com), from £345 a room a night.



BEST CITY BREAK: NIMB HOTEL,
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Positioned in the heart of Tivoli, Copenhagen's historic pleasure gardens, Nimb is that rare hotel that can be all things to all people. For children, it is a fairy-tale palace surrounded by amusements galore, from carousel rides to dragon boats, while adults will see it as the jewel in the crown of an urban horticultural sanctuary, which, in spring, blooms with a colourful array of daffodils, hyacinths and hydrangeas. After a day spent exploring the grounds, unwind in the vaulted Moroccan hammam, take a dip in the heated rooftop pool or dine on oysters, caviar and Valrhona chocolate mousse in the chic French brasserie. FRANCES HEDGES

Nimb Hotel (nimb.dk), from £398 a room a night.



BEST FOR
A LONG WEEKEND:
FARNCOMBE ESTATE,
BROADWAY, UK

Close to Broadway village in the Cotswolds is the Nook, a light-filled house that is ideal for a get-together with friends or a large family sojourn. There's a music room, complete with electric guitars, drumkits and vinyl records, a hot tub and three en-suite bedrooms overlooking fields that stretch to the horizon. As the property is part of the Farncombe Estate, you have access to an array of restaurants and activities, be it a dinner at Dormy House or a falconry session among kestrels and buzzards. HL

'The Nook', booked through Farncombe Estate (farncombeestate.co.uk), from £475 a night.







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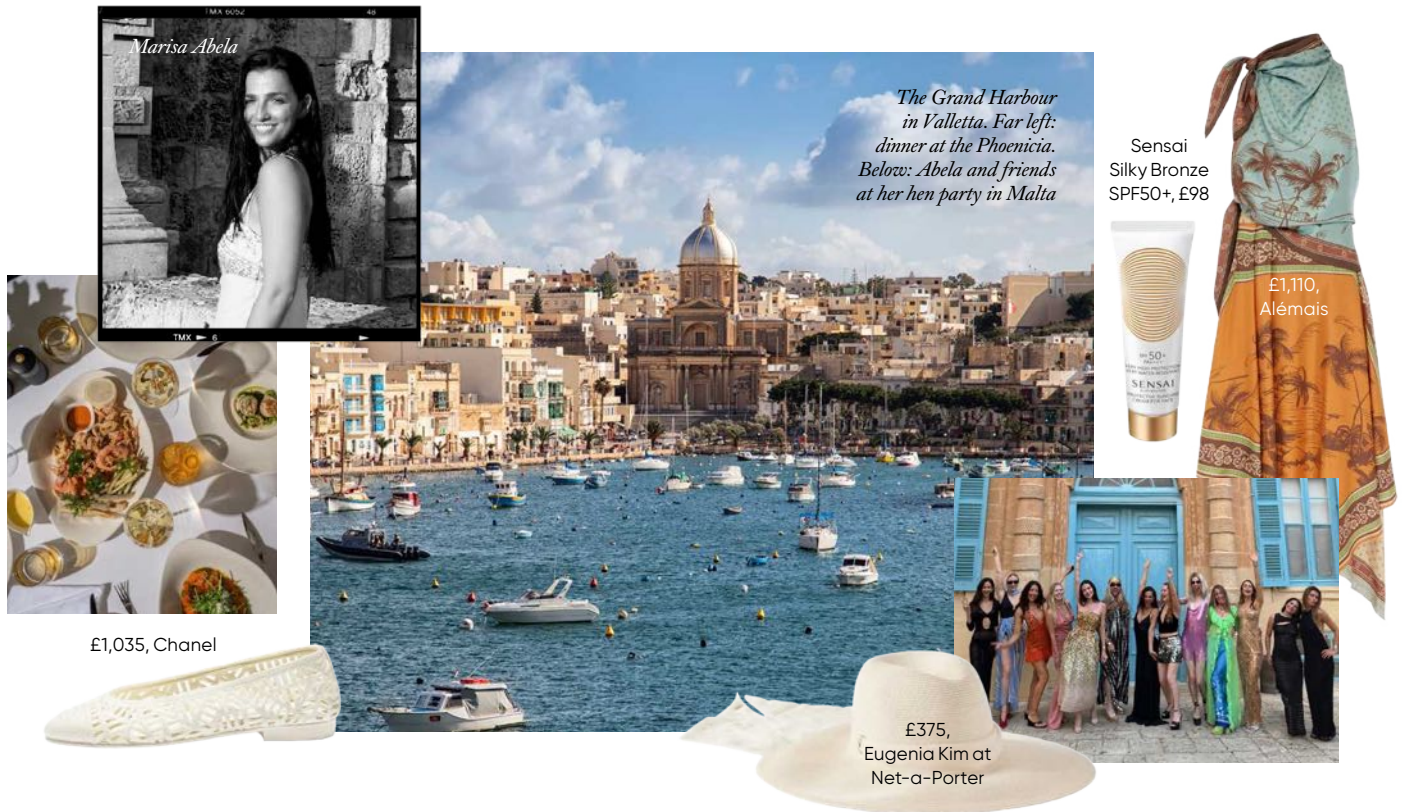
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INSIDER'S GUIDE

MARISA ABELA ON MALTA

The actress takes us on an intimate tour of her home away from home



My grandparents on my dad's side are from Malta and still live there. Growing up, it felt like another home, as I went every summer. One of my best friends is Maltese, too, and we go back about four times a year. As I've grown older, my relationship with the country has evolved; it has heritage and family but vitality and fun as well – I had my hen party there last year!

The Xara Palace in Mdina – known as the 'silent city', as it has practically no cars – is incredibly romantic. I stayed there with my husband Jamie on our first trip abroad together.

The capital, Valletta, is beautiful. For families, I'd recommend a stay at the Phoenicia. Wander down the alleys past sandstone buildings whose doors and shutters are painted in an array of colours. It's hilly, so you can climb high and look out over the sea; at Upper Barrakka Gardens you get great views of the Mediterranean. Visit Saint John's Co-Cathedral, too; there are some incredible Caravaggios inside.

Valletta is the best place for sitting outside and chatting in a restaurant. Try Da Pippo; there's no menu, and fresh seafood, meat and pasta are brought to the middle of the table, family-style. Music gets turned up for certain songs, and people climb on the tables and start dancing. Or board a gondola water-taxi over to Fort Saint Angelo, which is magical at sunset, and see which restaurant takes your fancy.

A trip isn't complete without pastizzi. They're delicious miniature pastries stuffed with ricotta, peas or ham. Also, try ftira, a type of Mediterranean tuna sandwich with tomatoes, capers and red onions in Maltese bread. Wash it down with Kinnie, the local soft drink – it's quite bitter and complex, but I love it – and Cisk beer. If I brought anything home, it would be the local honey.

Going on a boat is a great way to spend the day. Explore the blue lagoons, and the island of Gozo, which is half an hour from Valletta. You can stay at the Ta' Cenc hotel, which has a fantastic restaurant.

As Malta is quite close to the Equator – between Sicily and North Africa – it is hot. I like feeling relaxed in flowy Alémais dresses. There are lots of cobblestones, so wear comfortable footwear; I'd pack Staud sandals or Chanel ballet flats. Take a big straw hat, especially if you're going on a boat, and always have a bikini in your bag – you might be having a great cultural day, but if you're hot, you'll want to jump into the sea.

I leave my foundation at home. Instead, I'll use an SPF. My favourite is Augustinus Bader, as it sits nicely on my skin, but I also like Sensai – factor 50 all the way!

Malta has been under Italian and English rule, among other regimes. The culture and language – a mix of English, Italian and Arabic – are so rich. I like visiting the Roman ruins in Mdina and sinking into some fiction – maybe Pat Barker's *The Silence of the Girls* or *The Women of Troy* – because Malta feels so ancient, and these books transport you to that world. □

SCOTTISH PLAY

Heralded by bagpipes, Burns Night was celebrated in style by *Bazaar* Privé and friends

BY CHARLOTTE BROOK PHOTOGRAPHS BY IONA WOLFF



Lucy Halliday



Lydia Slater and Dougray Scott



Gugu Mbatha-Raw



Gala Gordon and Nia DaCosta



Christopher Kane



Max Gill and Lydia Slater



Catriona Chandler



Ruth Rogers

The dress code called for 'a touch of tartan', and it was in abundance at *Bazaar* Privé's Burns Night supper, held in Mount St Restaurant's Scottish Room. Gugu Mbatha-Raw stepped out of her Range Rover beaming, her lipstick as scarlet as her chequered tie, while *Bazaar*'s editor-in-chief Lydia Slater and the writer-director Max Gill posed in matching plaids. The focus soon turned from fashion to food, as the Fife-born actor Dougray Scott shared his secret porridge recipe, and fellow guests including Nia DaCosta and Christopher Kane exclaimed with delight as Orkney scallops were served. After a singalong to 'Auld Lang Syne', with Sammie Williams on the bagpipes, the actress Lucy Halliday delivered Burns' 'Address to a Haggis' in her finest Glaswegian brogue, after which she plunged a carving knife into the delicacy, while the merry gathering raised drams of whisky to the poet, to friends old and new, and to continued Caledonian conviviality.



Jessica Swale, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Ruth Rogers



Sammie Williams

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BAZAAR FASHION



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Sueur Swim is redefining luxury swimwear with couture-inspired designs made for the modern jet-setter. Designed to move seamlessly from beach to bar, the brand’s statement silhouettes blend elevated construction with wearable sensuality. Bestsellers like the Coquillage bikini set and chain-detailed tops have become cult favourites, celebrated for their sculpting fit, premium fabrics, and unmistakable European summer allure. Each piece is designed to be styled beyond the beach – worn poolside, to sunset aperitifs, or layered into resortwear looks. For women who dress boldly and live beautifully, Sueur Swim is more than swimwear – it’s a lifestyle. Discover the collection now at sueurswim.com and follow on socials [@sueurswim](https://www.instagram.com/sueurswim)

SMALL BAND, LARGE CUP APPROVED - VIA DI GIOIA SWIMWEAR

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Created by two sisters Seerat & Aashna, Seeaash is built on the idea that opposites don’t cancel each other, they complete each other. Soft yet strong, minimal yet detailed, the brand brings a fresh, modern take to



Indian luxury. Every piece is made to move with you, across moods, moments, and places. Rooted in Indian craftsmanship and designed for a global wardrobe, Seeaash brings a fresh global perspective to luxury pret. Every collection is a celebration of balance, emotion, and timelessness. Seeaash is where story, sisterhood, and style meet.



SEEAASH.IN

AVERY JAMES

Avery James Design Studio redefines modern bridal and occasion wear through bold silhouettes, refined structure and contemporary romance. Every design is one of a kind, bespoke and meticulously handcrafted to reflect the individuality of the woman who wears it. Architectural corsetry meets fluid, ethereal movement, creating gowns that feel both powerful and poetic. Clean lines, unexpected details and luxurious fabrics challenge tradition while remaining timeless. Rooted in couture craftsmanship and elevated by a modern aesthetic, Avery James dresses women who seek confidence, originality and understated drama. Each piece is designed exclusively for discerning clients seeking luxury. Discover more at www.averyjames.co.uk.



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SUSAN MAGEE MILLINERY

Susan Magee is an Irish milliner and hair artist renowned for sculptural, one-of-a-kind headwear that blurs the line between fashion and art. With over a decade of experience in bespoke millinery and more than twenty years in hairdressing, her work is meticulously designed to harmonise with both hairstyle and silhouette. Susan's creations have featured on Ireland AM and in collaboration with Gok Wan. Continuing a family legacy her (great-grandmother was a milliner)



Susan crafts exquisite pieces for weddings, race days and special occasions, offering bespoke commissions and statement collections for discerning, style-conscious women. Enquiries can be made via susanmageemillinery.com. Instagram or Facebook.



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BAZAAR BEAUTY



SKINCARE BY OLA

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Ola's expertise is shaped by continuous education and international training across the UK, Poland and abroad, including Harvard Medical School. As a certified Dermalogica Expert and a recipient of multiple **industry awards and professional**

distinctions, she is widely recognised for her advanced, thoughtful approach to skin health. Rather than relying on one-size-fits-all facials, Ola specialises in **bespoke treatment programmes**, often combining advanced technologies with holistic skin therapies to achieve visible, yet natural results. Her particular focus is on **healthy ageing**—supporting the skin's regenerative processes, improving quality and resilience, and addressing imperfections with minimally invasive methods.

Working exclusively with certified, professional-grade products and cutting-edge equipment, Skincare by Ola offers facials in Cambridge that balance science, precision, and passion. The result is not only healthier skin, but an experience defined by trust, expertise, and understated elegance.

www.skincarebyola.co.uk



SCAN ME



ANA SAKINYTE — QUEEN OF YOUTH

Ana Sakinyte is the founder and clinical force behind **Queen of Youth**, a luxury medical aesthetics brand focused on natural facial rejuvenation in the UK.

A GDC-registered Dental & Aesthetic Practitioner, Ana brings 19+ years of clinical experience and 15,000+ aesthetic treatments performed, known for precise technique, refined judgement, and results that enhance rather than alter. Recognised for facial harmony and collagen-stimulating injectables, Ana is sought after by patients with skin laxity, volume depletion, and age-related structural change. Her approach blends medical science with an exacting understanding of facial proportions to deliver subtle, elegant outcomes.

Ana completed Medical Aesthetic training at the Royal College of General Practitioners under the mentorship of a leading celebrity aesthetics doctor. She is currently

undertaking a Level 7 Master's Diploma in Cosmetic Injectables at the prestigious Harley Academy and recently completed an advanced masterclass with Dr Arthur Swift, a leading authority in facial aesthetics, visiting from the United States.

A media voice in aesthetic medicine, Ana appears in magazines and radio shows. Her clinics span Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and the Midlands, attracting a discreet, high-profile clientele.

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Alongside Doctor Kate is Nurse Sue, an independent nurse prescriber and aesthetic practitioner. Patients can book appointments with Doctor Kate or Nurse Sue, benefiting from the same shared standards of care, safety and natural enhancement that define the practice.

Consultations involve careful assessment and honest guidance. Treatments are bespoke and always led by what enhances not alters natural features. Knowing when not to treat is considered just as important as knowing how.

Set within the Cotswolds, the practice reflects the region's values of discretion, quality, and an unhurried approach to care. Based in Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury, Doctor Kate Cosmetics offers discreet, doctor-led aesthetics for patients who value expertise, and confidence.

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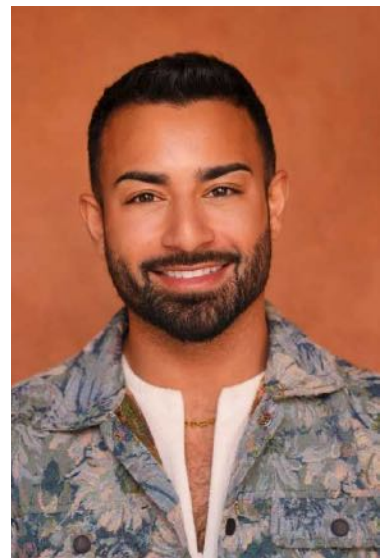
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Dr Sana at every visit. The clinic offers a curated selection of advanced regenerative treatments, including polynucleotides, PRP, microneedling, biostimulants and hair restoration. This is doctor-led aesthetic medicine, defined by trust and delivered with expertise and safety.

BAZAAR ESSENTIALS

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KUNYAHRA

Kunyahra was born from a quiet curiosity to fuse elegance with intention, shaped by the belief that modesty can feel powerful, expressive, and personal. Each silhouette is thoughtfully created to empower women, blending traditional elements with modern refinement for a look that feels both sophisticated and versatile.

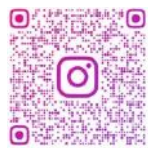
Founded by Mish Taznin, a mother of two, Kunyahra reflects a journey of balance. Ambition lived in late nights spent designing, in frequent trips to Dubai, the heart of Middle Eastern fashion, and in endless mood boards layered with fabrics, textures, and seasonal stories.

Motherhood did not pause her dreams. It moved alongside them, giving her vision new depth and quiet resilience.

Every abaya is handcrafted, making each piece unique and a reflection of Mish's commitment to artistry and quality. What sets Kunyahra apart is its meticulous design process, where every fabric is carefully selected and every detail refined with intention. The result is a modest wardrobe that feels intimate yet elevated, luxurious yet effortless.

Kunyahra is for women who navigate life with confidence, who dress with purpose, and who understand that beauty lives in both strength and softness. The expression is timeless femininity, designed to be lived in.

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BAZAAR HEALTH

EMPOWERING WOMEN'S HEALTH: LEADING THE WAY IN ENDOMETRIOSIS CARE AT CROMWELL HOSPITAL

March marks Endometriosis Awareness Month, a time to recognise the millions of women whose lives are profoundly affected by this often misunderstood condition. Endometriosis - where tissue similar to the womb lining grows elsewhere in the body - can cause chronic pain, fertility challenges, and significant disruption to everyday life. For many women, the journey to diagnosis is long, averaging around seven years, making timely specialist care more essential than ever.

At the forefront of endometriosis care is Cromwell Hospital's International Centre for Endometriosis, a BSGE accredited facility offering access to world class diagnostics, treatment, and multidisciplinary expertise. Led by renowned consultant gynaecologist



Mr Amer Raza, the Centre provides rapid access to personalised care plans designed to empower women through knowledge, clarity, and compassionate support.

The Centre brings together a multidisciplinary team to provide expert advice on all areas of this complex condition. This comprehensive approach supports every facet of a woman's wellbeing - from pain management and fertility considerations to specialist support for teenagers experiencing symptoms.

Cromwell Hospital is a leader in surgical treatment for endometriosis, performing the highest number of surgeries in the UK for severe and complex rectovaginal endometriosis in 2024. The Hospital is also pioneering the future of minimally invasive surgery, becoming the first and only hospital in the UK to offer robotic endometriosis surgery using the da Vinci Single Port (SP) system, a groundbreaking advance in women's health. This innovative technology means that patients can experience less scarring, less blood loss, and have a faster recovery compared to traditional surgical options.

Earlier this year, Cromwell Hospital celebrated a major milestone: completing its 150th da Vinci SP gynaecology procedure, reaffirming its position as a leader in robotic gynaecological surgery and its ongoing commitment to delivering the highest standard of care.

Whether a woman is seeking answers, exploring treatment options, or looking for specialist support, the International Centre for Endometriosis offers a safe, compassionate environment grounded in clinical excellence. With rapid access to diagnostics, and a dedicated team of experts, the Centre ensures every woman feels heard, understood, and supported on her journey to recovery.

This March, Cromwell Hospital stands with women everywhere - raising awareness, advancing treatment, and redefining what exceptional endometriosis care should look like.

Find out more or make an appointment: [cromwellhospital.com/endo](https://www.cromwellhospital.com/endo) or call: 020 7244 4886

Bazaar Fashion

Enchanté Communication - Global Fashion Brand Feature of the Year Exclusive Interview with Shuji Kudo for Node



Shuji Kudo
Founders of Node
Enchanté Communication - Japan

Enchanté Editor's Pick - Node



1. P-63 Hollows



2. R-19 Fusion



3. BR-30 Regeneration



4. R-106 Afterglow

“Where Time Wears Beauty: NODE Jewellery and the Poetry of Change”

By the time you encounter NODE, there is an immediate sense that this is jewellery meant to be lived with rather than merely observed. Often described as “wearable sculpture,” the work resists the idea of permanence as something fixed or static. Instead, rings soften, surfaces shift and edges record touch. Time is not treated as an adversary, but as a collaborator. In a culture that frequently equates beauty with flawlessness, NODE offers a quieter, more generous proposition: that meaning is formed through change.

That understanding began early. The designer recalls their mother’s wedding ring, worn constantly and never removed. Over time, the metal became sharp. One day, while doing housework, she cut her hand on it. Rather than seeing damage, the designer saw beauty. The injury, the altered shape of the ring and the accumulation of years and experiences seemed to surface all at once. It was a moment of revelation. Jewellery, they realised, is not an object in isolation, but a trace of a person’s time.

This philosophy underpins NODE’s refusal to present its pieces as finished. The works are sold in their initial state, intentionally left open to transformation. In an industry that prizes perfection and finality, this approach feels quietly radical. The designer resists the very notion of completion, explaining that a piece cannot be finished by the maker alone. Its impression changes with the wearer, the moment, the environment and the gradual transformation of the material itself. The designer sets the starting point; completion is something that unfolds elsewhere.

The fluid movement between jewellery and art making follows the same logic. The designer does not experience these as separate disciplines, but as different conditions for the same instinct. The distinction is simple: whether the work is worn or not. Each idea finds its most natural form, without hierarchy.

At the heart of NODE lies the Buddhist concept, the understanding that nothing remains the same, even for a moment. Beauty, in this context, emerges through an awareness of time passing. The

designer speaks of small, almost unnoticed scenes, an empty park, a glass left on a table, that stir feelings of transience, sadness and nostalgia. These are the moments that leave marks on the heart, and it is those marks that continue to draw them forward.

While this sensitivity is deeply connected to Japanese culture, particularly the long established sensibility of wabi sabi and the belief that spirits reside in old objects, the designer believes it is not culturally bound. Ephemerality, they suggest, is something that can be felt universally, regardless of background. There is also a sense of quiet spirituality in the work, an intentional stillness. The designer hopes that wearing NODE might help steady emotional fluctuations, even briefly. Calm, they believe, is not an indulgence but a necessity. True sensibility exists in silence, in the mental space that allows us to feel deeply. Richness of heart is born in moments of pause, when we notice a small stone on the ground or follow the slow movement of clouds. The jewellery is meant to act as a gentle reminder to stop and breathe. Authorship, in this context, is willingly surrendered.

A piece becomes fully alive only through interaction with another person. Their time, consciousness and presence are breathed into it, forming its existence. The wearer is not a passive recipient, but an active participant in creation. This relationship, the designer says, is the work’s source of energy. While the physical transformation of a piece is never surprising to them, the emotional relationships people form with the work often are. The designer recalls a wearer who asked for a repair to remain visible, explaining that the damage was part of their personal story with the jewellery. In other moments, it is the quiet softening of a surface, grooves rounded by years of wear, that reveals the depth of connection between object and person.

Despite how personal NODE feels, it never imposes identity. The designer believes objects naturally change according to their owner and sees no need to prescribe meaning. They simply look inward and create from that place, trusting the work to adapt.

Jewellery, they acknowledge, often accompanies people through moments of love, loss and transition. Yet rather than hoping for an overtly emotional bond, the designer imagines something subtler: a relationship that evolves alongside the wearer’s way of life. Each piece becomes a vessel for memory and time, a quiet record of existence.

Working within a global creative landscape, the designer does not dwell on challenges or external pressures. For them, the most difficult and meaningful act is simply continuation, showing up and remaining faithful to one’s sensibility. Innovation, by international standards, is never the goal. Creation is about honesty in each moment.

As more designers seek to create work that carries meaning beyond aesthetics, NODE stands apart by refusing to impose interpretation. Meaning, the designer insists, cannot be forced. The object merely acts as a trigger. Its true depth is formed through the imagination, time and inner life of the person who holds it. When someone encounters NODE for the first time, the designer does not hope for a lingering feeling within the wearer. Instead, they hope the opposite, that the emotion remains within the piece itself. That whenever it is seen again, it quietly calls back the memories and sensations of that moment. In this way, NODE does not seek to arrest time, but to hold it gently, faithfully and without resistance.

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