ISSUE 08. MARCH 2026

ELLE

AUSTRALIA

The ELLE BEAUTY AWARDS
WHAT OUR EDITORS REALLY USE

FASHION'S NEXT MUSE
SUNDAY ROSE
KIDMAN URBAN

THE NEW ROMANTICS
110 pages of style inspo


LOUIS VUITTON
LE MONOGRAM, TRANSCENDING GENERATIONS SINCE 1896
Le Speedy - 1930

1896. At a time when Louis Vuitton's innovative trunks were reaching unprecedented influence, the visionary founder's son, Georges, sought an elegant solution to both protect the integrity of his creations and embody the House's distinctive identity. In tribute to his father, he created a graphic arrangement of interlaced LV initials and stylized floral motifs to form an ornamental pattern. And so, the Monogram was born. Conceived in a Paris alive with artistic ferment – a city where Neo-Gothic style, Japonism, and the emerging Art Nouveau movement were redefining beauty through structure and symbolism – the Monogram quickly became a universal emblem of distinction and modernity. Continually renewed through dialogue with art and culture, the Monogram has been reinterpreted by major contemporary artists, revealing its universality and boundless creative power. Across its 130-year journey, it has remained timeless: a singular testament to creativity and craftsmanship, passed down from generation to generation.

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NEW



ELIE SAAB

L'HOMME

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NEW



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ARIANA GRANDE IN SWAROVSKI MILLENIA

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STYLIST Naomi Smith
HAIR Gonn Kinoshita at The Wall Group
MAKEUP Nadia Tayeh at A-Frame Agency
MANICURE Cenita Scott at The Only Agency
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***ELLE* MAN**

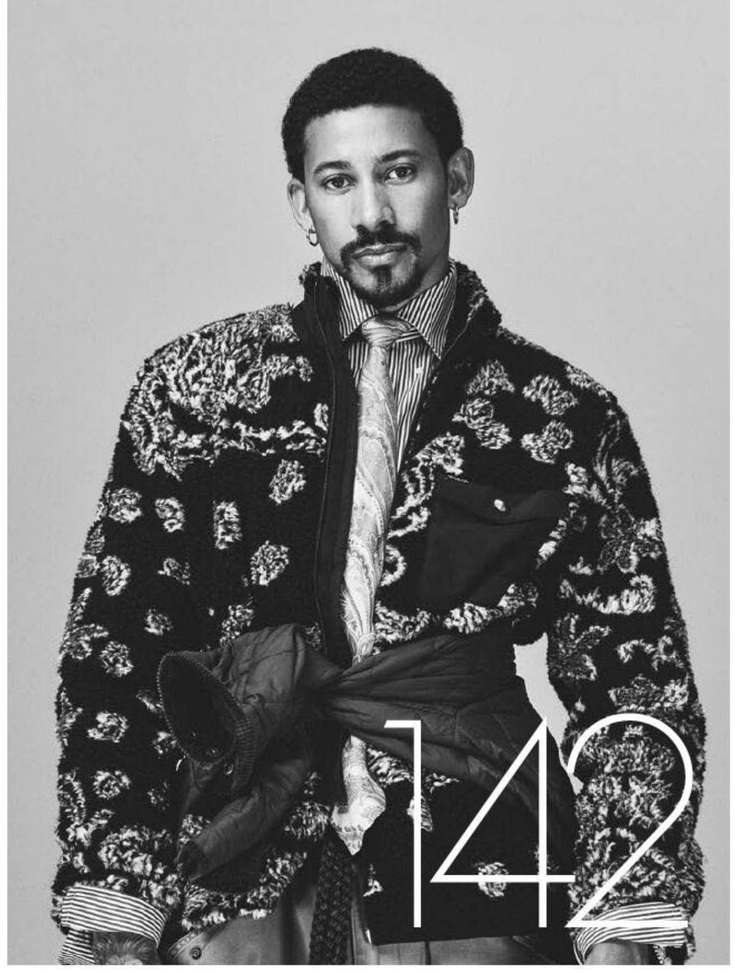
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ELLE *loves*



Nicolaï Crème Ebène Intense eau de parfum, 100ml, $415.

Miu Miu top, price on application, pants, $2800, and shoes, $3500.
TOP Polo Ralph Lauren jackets, $429, and $699 (around waist), shirt, $209, pants, $449, tie, $219, and belt, $119.

ELLE

Our team shares their new-season must-haves



SALLY
Beauty director
Bio-Oil Skincare Oil.



PHOEBE
Digital shopping editor
Omega watch.



LAURA
Chief sub-editor
Valentino Garavani bag.



MELISSA
Managing editor
Natio Clear Urban Defence Face Fluid SPF 50+.

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JAMIE
Art director
Celine belt.



ALEXANDRA
Deputy editor
Shark hairdryer.



JORDAN
Fashion editor
Nike x Skims shoes.

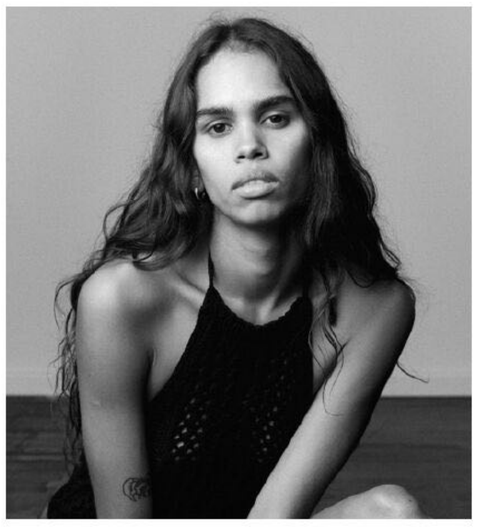


NICOLA
Acing photo director
Rag & Bone jeans.

Contributors

The creatives behind the issue tell us their best styling tips for autumn





Model, 'Play it Again'

TATYANA PERRY

"Invest in one beautiful structured coat."



Writer, 'Consent Revolution'

KATHRYN MADDEN

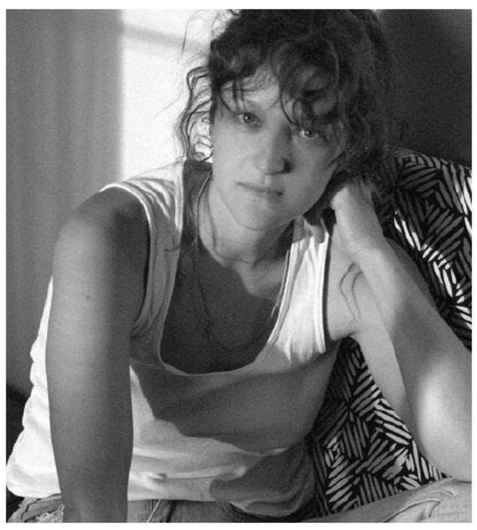
"Embrace anything with a funnel neck. The cocoon-like collar says, 'I'm nonchalant, I'm unbothered, and when the chill kicks in, I don't even need a scarf.' I'm loving looser jacket silhouettes and even finance-bro-adjacent quarter-zips. The tan cashmere one at Chanel Métiers d'art 2026 was a dream."



Writer, 'So You Want to be an Art Collector'

MICHELLE WANG

"Autumn is about embracing a jacket with personality. I rotate between a chocolate-coloured vintage suede jacket, a cropped black suit jacket with a Peter Pan collar and a trusty cream Polo Ralph Lauren trench with leather detailing."



Photographer, 'Sunday's Finest'

HANNAH SCOTT-STEVENSON

"A good night's sleep."



MICHAEL CARRELLO

Editor's letter



Our cover star, Sunday Rose Kidman Urban, wears Dior. For more, turn to page 102.



Every other month, a fashion brand anoints a new muse: a cool-girl ingenue ascends; a legacy supermodel returns; an It-girl is plucked from a Josh Safdie casting line-up to become a social media obsession (Odessa A'zion, I'm looking at you). At *ELLE*, we make it our thing to shine a light on all of these fascinating young women on the verge of something big. And if they're Australian? Even better!

This is officially the season of Sunday Rose. The eldest daughter of Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban was raised largely out of the spotlight and then suddenly found herself in the centre of it when she made her debut at Miu Miu's spring/summer 2025 show in October 2024. A year later, she walked Dior's spring/summer 2026 show and carved a really lovely friendship with creative director Jonathan Anderson. Her love of fashion didn't begin there, however. When she was young, Sunday would accompany her mum on photoshoots.

"I definitely gained a lot of interest from those experiences, especially being privileged enough to experience them at a young age," the 17-year-old says in her southern American twang with Australian inflections on certain words. "My mum is someone who has always been so creative and my biggest inspiration in life. She's a key part of everything I do."

Shooting her first Australian cover in her home town of Nashville in Tennessee, fashion's new cool girl was intelligent, lively, hardworking and delivered in spades. See the shoot on page 102.

Sunday's dream is to study filmmaking. What's super interesting is how she manages the whiplash of walking the biggest runways in the world and then being back in a school classroom in Nashville. When she walked for Miu Miu, she was "thinking about my chemistry homework and hoping my teacher would give me an extension on the deadline". She shot our cover on a Saturday and then went to her winter formal that evening, before heading to New York Fashion Week a few days after that. Being able to balance those total extremes and the pace that schedule requires — along with all the other challenges that come with being young — is quite extraordinary.

"Honestly, being in school is actually really helpful for all of that," she tells *ELLE*. "The privilege of having these experiences and meeting so many new people is so amazing, but as a teenager it's so easy to get sucked into all of it so fast. So being able to come back [to Nashville] and keep that perspective of being back at high school keeps me grounded."

Elsewhere in the issue, First Nations model Tatyana Perry wears Chanel's fresh and energetic spring/summer 2026 collection (page 118), we catch up with Daisy Edgar-Jones about all things beauty (page 162) and our *ELLE* Man this issue is Keiynan Lonsdale, who just hit Netflix with his new film, *War Machine* (page 142). All new. All muses. All *ELLE*.

Enjoy the issue!

Jessica

JESSICA BAILEY
EDITOR



My new-season picks

Dior bag charm, $1450; Loewe candle, $280.

HANNAH SCOTT-STEVENSON AT ARTBOXBLACK; LARA BLACKWELL



Get the look

FLUSHED CHEEKS, ROSY LIPS AND NATURAL SKIN: OUR COVER STAR, SUNDAY ROSE KIDMAN URBAN, EMBODIES THIS SEASON'S ROMANTIC MOOD





HANNAH SCOTT-STEVENSON AT ARTBOXBLACK

See the full story on page 102.

With her porcelain skin, crystal blue eyes, rosebud lips and striking poise, Sunday Rose Kidman Urban radiates her star-studded pedigree. For our cover shoot, the *ELLE* team travelled to her home town of Nashville, photographing the model on a film set that conjured a 1980s motel room. The shoot captured Sunday looking heavenly in Dior's fall 2026 collection – Jonathan Anderson's second women's collection for the house since taking the helm.

Sunday's makeup, all by Dior Beauty, was equally compelling. Her flawless complexion took centrestage courtesy of the new Dior Forever Skin Wear foundation, which boasts a natural matte finish that lets skin shine through. To bring a healthy hit of colour to her cheeks, Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in Rosewood was tapped into her high points then blended well for a seamless feel. A hint of brown shadow was worked into her upper and lower lash lines, completed with a layer or two of mascara. To finish the look, Sunday's pillowy lips were given blurred definition with a hint of smudged-on Rouge Dior On Stage lipstick in Confident Nude. Pared back yet striking, youthful yet self-assured, Sunday is definitely one to watch.

1 Diorshow 5 Couleurs eye palette in Soft Cashmere, $121 **2** Dior J'adore Intense eau de parfum, 100ml, $310 **3** Diorshow Overvolume mascara, $69 **4** Rouge Dior On Stage lipstick in Confident Nude, $75 **5** Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in Rosewood, $79 **6** Dior Forever Skin Wear foundation in 1N, $107.





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ELLE

first look



FASHION'S NEW FRONTIER

The highly anticipated spring/summer 2026 collections have finally hit Aussie stores. Here are the trends to know; can AI help you get dressed?; and what's old is new again.

IMAXTREE

ON TREND

ROMANTIC RUFFLES, BOLD STRIPES AND TACTILE TEXTURE: THE SPRING/SUMMER 2026 COLLECTIONS WERE A MASTERCLASS IN CREATIVITY AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

WORDS BY SARAH NOONAN



Get to work

Forget the boardroom blues – this season, workwear is clocking in with attitude. Across the runways, designers took the familiar codes of utility and gave them a fresh edge. Bottega Veneta delivered with a powdery blue suede set, softening traditional tailoring through texture. Then there was Miu Miu's pleated leather take on the humble apron, transforming kitchen cliché into a symbol of modern power dressing. Elsewhere, classic suiting took new shape via high collars and short sleeves, trenches were cropped and cinched, and boilersuits gained unexpected movement – all pointing to a new idea of professionalism. The memo? 'Office appropriate' has a whole new meaning.

Book smart

Call it scholarly chic or study-hall glamour – either way, fashion is leaning heavily into intellectual dressing. Academic-style references came in the form of bows, scarves and sharply pressed shirting that flirted with tradition. At Ralph Lauren, a sheer blouse anchored by a dramatic red bow pushed preppy codes to the edge, while Dior's pinstripes, bowtie and book-ready tote brought a little Blair Waldorf flair to serious tailoring. McQueen sharpened the mood with corseted chemisettes layered beneath structured blazers, and Celine's sculptural scarf embraced architectural drama. Layers, unexpected volume and subtle exaggerations proved that brains and style are interchangeable. Consider it a lesson in looking smart.

ELLE *trend report*



Touch and go

Soft, sharp, slippery, scratchy – spring/summer 2026 was all about fabric that begged to be touched. Chanel let silk whisper over swishing fringe skirts and Gucci set feathers fluttering along the edge of sheer gowns. Balenciaga crafted sculptural, ribbon-like curves that demanded a second look, while at Givenchy by Sarah Burton, golden feathers crowned a barely there bra-and-skirt set, creating mischief at every turn. Unexpected pairings such as soft silk with hard leather or feathers against glossy metallics make even the most simple silhouettes feel like the moment. If there's one lesson this season, it's that texture takes centre stage.

New romanticism

Ruffles ran riot on the runway this season, giving Victorian romance a modern style upgrade. Vaquera set the scene with billowing frocks that seemed straight out of a contemporary period drama, while Dior turned diaphanous lace into something slyly coquettish, complete with protruding hips and a daringly large bow at the small of the back. At Givenchy, Sarah Burton elevated organza into an unexpectedly bridal spectacle, spilling from the chest like a cloud of light, and Zimmermann let floral tulle tumble in soft cascades, as if spring itself gatecrashed the runway. Think of it as an urgent call to plan something grand.

LOUIS VUITTON

ULLA JOHNSON

ANTONIO MARRAS

DIOR

VAQUERA

ZIMMERMANN

GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON

FENDI

DIOR

CELINE

MARIE ADAM-LEENAERDT

PRADA

LANVIN

GABRIELA HEARST

BALENCIAGA

LOEWE

Minimal matters

Minimalism has matured beyond its quiet-luxury past thanks to a slew of confident and subtly daring silhouettes. Prada trimmed utilitarian shirts and skirts into clean, wearable geometry, while Marie Adam-Leenaerdt's scarlet high-neck sets proved restraint can still demand attention in every room. Lanvin played with proportions, pairing breast-skimming crops with relaxed tailoring that somehow felt like the new office chic, and Celine broadened the shoulders and slimmed the legs – a nod to minimalism's new architectural ambitions. Over at Loewe, signature palettes injected a flash of red leather into a familiar silhouette, turning a zip-up mini into a tiny act of rebellion. If this is the new 'less is more', we're on board.

Get in line

Stripes are lining up this season, but they're not playing it straight. Chanel teased the eye, clashing horizontals with verticals so deliberately that every step felt like an optical trick. Tod's riffed on the matching set, staggering stripes and colours in asymmetric precision, while Anteprima channelled resortwear whimsy, turning polo-inspired skirts into holiday-ready essentials you'll want to wear long after the suitcase is packed away. Even Rabanne mixed sporty codes with sharp glamour, pairing vibrant-striped polos with metallic minis. Straight or staggered, stripes are calling all the shots.

ANTEPRIMA

LOEWE

ZOMER

TOD'S

HERMES

RABANNE

CHANEL

GETTY IMAGES; IMAXTREE; COURTESY OF THE BRANDS; ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI


ARMARIUM
MIU MIU
ESSENTIELANTWERP
PUCCI
PHILIPP PLEIN
FENDI
BROWSE
DRESS ME

The clueless closet has arrived!

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS FUNDAMENTALLY RESHAPING HOW WE APPROACH THE MOST ROUTINE OF TASKS – INCLUDING GETTING DRESSED. LAUREN COCHRANE EXPLORES WHAT THIS MEANS FOR OUR WARDROBES

Thirty-one years ago, millennials everywhere swooned over Cher Horowitz's digitised closet in *Clueless*, dreaming of the day when we too could rely on a computer to determine what we should wear (and even show us images of how it looked on our bodies). Now, thanks to AI, that dream is finally becoming a reality.

Take a recent dressing dilemma I faced. My day started with meetings, followed by an afternoon in the office, and finished with an evening at the ballet, with no chance to change. The weather forecast predicted rain, but a mild temperature. Confused about what to wear, I consulted ChatGPT, which recommended a 'one-and-done outfit idea' of a midi-dress, low-block heels and a tailored blazer. I also tried Daydream — a US-based AI chatbot specifically designed to help you shop for clothing — for inspiration. It was the suggestion of a Polo Ralph Lauren knit midi-dress that proved helpful, because it reminded me of an Arket dress I already owned. I pulled it out of the wardrobe and, with ChatGPT's low-block heels (and an umbrella just in case), it worked perfectly to take me — as they say — from day to night. That was problem solved in less than three minutes, compared to the hour or so I would have spent agonising the old-fashioned way.

And this is only the beginning. While chatbots are one way we can involve AI technology in what we wear, there are also wardrobe organisers including Whering and Acloset, which allow you to create your own outfits with what you already own, and shopping apps such as Doji and Alta, which create an avatar of you to virtually try on outfits. It's the kind of innovation that, even five years ago, might have seemed like something in a sci-fi movie (or cult rom-com), but now is already mainstream. In a recent survey, one-third of gen Z and a quarter of millennials said they use generative AI when deciding what to buy.

Matthew Drinkwater, director of Fashion Innovation Agency at the



London College of Fashion, has studied the intersection between shopping and AI. He hopes the technology might eventually change fashion completely, by "shifting how we measure satisfaction, not by how much we buy, but by how much joy, expression and meaning we derive from what we already own". Malique Morris, senior e-commerce correspondent at *The Business of Fashion*, puts it in more on-the-ground terms: "In the next five to 10 years, some form of consulting these agents will become a norm," he says. "Just what form that will take remains to be seen."

Using Whering is something of a window into what the future might look like. Founded in 2020 and already downloaded by seven million people, it allows you to digitise and, therefore, 'shop' your own wardrobe. While the upload process is a bit time-consuming (I put up around 20 items, which took more than an hour — the recommended amount is 100), there's no doubt that it's a thrill to browse your own clothes and make outfits you had never thought of IRL. I now pair a gingham ERL shirt with a secondhand plaid kilt, for example.

Its secret weapon is a tool called Dress Me, which devises new ways to wear what you own. "It might say, 'Here are the boots that you clearly don't love anymore — here are five ways for you to be able to style them today,'" founder Bianca Rangecroft says. "It's trying to show you that this dopamine hit that, previously, people like me would get from shopping, you could also get from styling your own wardrobe."

We use AI for tasks such as adapting a recipe for what's in the fridge or composing an email to the council — a cheat code to make life a little easier. This can also apply here. As well as my ballet conundrum, I've recently asked ChatGPT what to pack for a trip to Vienna in December (a long coat to block out the wind, and lots of layers) and for the most hard-wearing slides to replace my current bin shoes (Nike 'Benassi', apparently). In the weeks leading up to the trip, the chatbot's advice to bring layers is top of mind. It might not be rocket science for a European city in winter, but it does allow me to circumvent the boring stuff when packing, so I can focus on which earrings I might bring (new silver ones from Basha Harris), or what book I want to read on the plane (*Perfection* by Vincenzo Latronico). Michelle Fradin, OpenAI's product lead for commerce in ChatGPT, says it meets a familiar need: "It cuts through decision fatigue. It doesn't just narrow options — it helps you articulate what you actually want."

Daydream (with user experience that looks a little like a nicer version of Google Shopping) stemmed from founder Julie Bornstein's own personal frustrations. "For so long, I wanted a tool that could just search the web for all the fashion needs I had," she says. "I wanted Google to be good at this, but it just isn't." She says a fashion-specific chatbot is a good solution, and gives her own experience of searching for a party dress as an example: "There were some really pretty red-lace dresses that inspired me, but they were a bit too low-cut," she says. "I used our Say More feature and found a gorgeous red Self-Portrait lace dress that's not too low-cut but has a beautiful neckline."

There are more style chatbots to come. OpenAI has launched shopping research, which allows you to purchase directly from links in your search, and the US has Instant Checkout, so you can buy items within ChatGPT itself. Daydream, meanwhile, has an update that will no doubt appeal to the chronically online: the ability to screenshot a post on Instagram and upload the image to find the item.

The more you interact with these agents, of course, the more they learn about you. "We're moving towards assistants that help you think ahead through your day and make smarter decisions, without you having to always ask the question," Fradin says. "In fashion, that could mean suggesting outfits based on your upcoming calendar, for example." This does bring up issues of privacy, though. Drinkwater warns that AI done badly "risks becoming overly persuasive or invasive". "When your data extends to your body, behaviour and emotions, it has to be handled

"[CHATGPT] DOESN'T JUST NARROW OPTIONS – IT HELPS YOU ARTICULATE WHAT YOU ACTUALLY WANT"

– MICHELLE FRADIN

with extreme care," he explains. "Done responsibly, though, AI could help redefine fashion as an experience that feels more intentional and creative, not just more efficient."

Indeed, what is perhaps more surprising at the crossroads of fashion and AI is how women are engaging with it beyond the day-to-day queries. OpenAI reports people often search for what to wear during more emotionally charged moments such as post-pregnancy, as well as to expand personal creativity when it comes to getting dressed. "It's becoming a tool for inspiration as much as practicality," Fradin says.

Everyone gets dressed and shops differently, of course. While I appreciated and admired the wardrobe organising apps — and, indeed, admire friends who organise their outfits for the week on a Sunday — that's not me. My style leans towards spontaneity. In researching this story, the app I enjoyed the most was Doji, the invite-only virtual-try-on start-up that recently raised $20 million in a seed-funding round.

After a short registration process that involves sending six selfies and two full-body images, avatar Lauren arrives. A better version of me (more glam), she looks a little like a model on Ssense. The fun happens when different outfits are suggested for you to reject or accept. An Isabel Marant frilled camisole and mules? No, thank you. A Halfboy tank top, Re/Done jeans and Proenza Schouler heels? Yes, please. It's a game that is both addictive and informative — whether that's discovering designers I wasn't aware of or unexpected combinations. Even if I don't really have the budget to buy designer clothes every day, the collected looks allow me to dream — and inspire my own outfits.

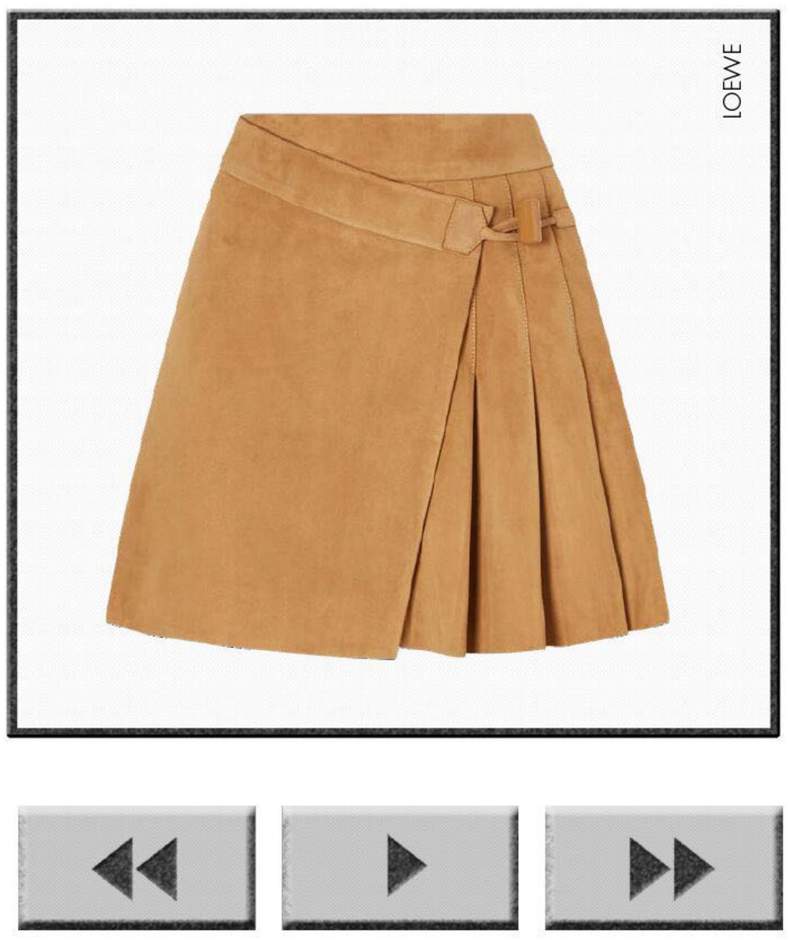
Dorian Dargan, co-founder of Doji, says this is intentional. "We don't want to become like an AI-stylist app," he says. "We want to build tools to enable people to be more creative, to have more fun. Fun was actually a major ingredient that we felt was missing from the fashion-shopping experience." Dargan reveals users say they even go to Doji as an alternative to doomscrolling — an endorsement if ever there was one.

Doji's avatars may only be the tip of the iceberg. Morris says one of the most futuristic developments of AI he has seen is avatars 'walking' around, demonstrating clothes in situ. While he's excited about such developments, he suggests the very trendiness of some innovations might mean they have a ceiling. "It is geared towards people who care about how they dress and have a sense of who they are and like the clothes they have," he says, adding that it's for "a very fashiony consumer, versus a casual shopper".

One AI development that will affect all casual shoppers — even if they don't know it — is innovation in fit, a bugbear familiar to anyone who has ever placed an online order. Fit Collective, the start-up founded by Phoebe Gormley in 2023, uses AI to collate information about fit provided when items are returned, so brands can tweak sizing — meaning the widely varying fits currently found throughout the fashion industry might become a thing of the past. "It's trying to use AI in this way that is behind the scenes, tidying up this messy process that brands hate anyway," Gormley says.

The founder predicts that fit may become something we have more control over in the next few years, as measurements become more of a norm, potentially using an upgrade of the measuring-tape tool already on iPhones. "I think you're going to be able to scan it once every six months, maybe when you finish the gym in tight clothing, and see what your body measurements are," she says. These can then be used when shopping online, like you auto-fill your password: "A pop-up will say, 'Do you want to auto-fill your body measurements?'", so you can accurately pick the right size.

Of course, as with a lot of AI, there are things it can't replicate. Drinkwater points to "serendipity", a quality that AI, by its algorithmic nature, is not known for. Ever the futurist, however, he argues that might not always be the case. "The real opportunity is to design systems that surface the unexpected, that celebrate creative diversity rather than standardise it," he says. "If we get that right, AI could help us rediscover what fashion has always done best — connect people to culture, to imagination and to moments of genuine wonder." Alternatively, there can be a mix of human and AI, as at Whering, where real-life stylists will soon consult on your wardrobe. "AI can help you with baseline stuff. It can help you push the boundaries of your creativity," Rangecroft says. "But, sometimes, you just need a real human to [understand], 'I'm going to see my ex next week. I need to make sure my outfit is on point.'"



ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI

Period piece


HARRIS REED S/S 2026

DESIGNERS ARE AGAIN TAKING THEIR CUES FROM THE HISTORY BOOKS, BUT THIS SEASON, IT'S WITH A PLAYFUL TWIST. DIVYA VENKATARAMAN LOOKS AT WHAT'S BEHIND THE REVIVAL



When it comes to fashion, you'd be forgiven for thinking the old adage of 'nothing new under the sun' is more of a commandment. (Fitting, in a way, given it's originally from the Book of Ecclesiastes.) Old ground has been retrodden at alarming pace: we've shuffled through the '90s, the '00s, the '10s in just the past decade. For a while, it looked like we'd double back on ourselves in some sort of sartorial time warp, a blur of reduxes and retro-reimaginings. But there's a shift afoot: designers are looking back, beyond teenage nostalgia, further than their mothers' closets, and peering way into the annals of history. There's a period revival underway, and it looks different this time.

"Vain trifles as they seem, clothes have, they say, more important offices than to merely keep us warm," wrote Virginia Woolf in *Orlando*. 'Frock consciousness' wore on Woolf's mind; she was preoccupied with fashion but resisted how much she loved it. Her characters used clothes to play with who they were; with gender, with art, with lovers. Perhaps that's why Dior's autumn/winter 2025 collection looked back to *Orlando* for inspiration: Maria Grazia Chiuri, in one of her last shows for the house, showed frock coats and lace-trimmed pantaloons, ruffled collars and billowing blouses. It took

SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO S/S 2026

ERDEM S/S 2026

ERDEM S/S 2026

SIMONE ROCHA S/S 2026



SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO S/S 2026

HARRIS REED S/S 2026

LOUIS VUITTON S/S 2026

ERDEM S/S 2026

McQUEEN S/S 2026

the silhouettes of the time — the exaggerated waists, the blown-out hips — and infused them with modern preoccupations: her brocade was in fact made of crisp nylon, technical and sporty, and zip-up corsets were worn as optional layering pieces rather than restrictions. Bloomers were worn with J'adore Dior slogan tees; there was an irony to the military jackets. It was a sidewards glance at 19th-century femininity, taking its codes and putting it through a wash of newness. "They change our view of the world and the world's view of us," Woolf wrote of clothes. If that's the case, then Chiuri's clothes, with their blend of Victorian glamour and tongue-in-cheek modernness, are for the woman who wants the world to see her sense of play, of theatrics, of performance.

What began there bloomed in the collections that followed. For spring/summer 2026, a slew of houses looked to the Victorian and Regency eras for inspiration. At Saint Laurent, Anthony Vaccarello showed a series of vapour-like dresses in varying degrees of ruffled. There was a delightful witchiness to them, each in deep black and jewel shades of ruby, mustard and tart apple green. Thick cross pendants hung from models' necks, glimmering with black cabochons. Erdem opted for high, romantic necklines and austere lace, while Harris Reed showed exposed crinoline cages for maximum impact. Who said period dressing had to be all about nipping and cinching and restricting? In the hands of these designers, history was made … fun.

Australian designers are putting their own spins on period dressing, too. For its latest collection, Melbourne-based label Perple pulled together Victorian details — tiny bloomers, aristocratic high socks, corset panelling — and put them in the context of outer space. A black boned and lined gown was made out of deadstock nylon with a peculiar sheen. A white cotton skirt was finished with corset-style lacing and metal cords that reflect the 'machine tubings' of spaceships. Designer Huiliana Chandra-Curry says most styles from the Victorian era exaggerate the female form — corseted

HISTORY BECOMES A KIND OF COSTUME BOX, A PLACE TO DIG AROUND IN AND TAKE FROM, A SITE OF WHIMSY AND DISCOVERY



SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO S/S 2026



McQUEEN S/S 2026

Bridgerton (left and bottom) offers plenty of sartorial inspiration with its embellished gowns, extravagant jewellery and elaborate hairstyles, even if the costumes aren't entirely accurate to the Regency period the show is set in; *Wuthering Heights* (below) has created its own take on period dressing, referencing contemporary fashion and Old Hollywood as well as the actual period.



waists, puffed sleeves, ruffled hems — and in doing so, make femininity feel theatrical rather than natural. But in Perple's world, the drama reflects the romance of the period rather than the restrictiveness. "That time was punctuated by strong female leaders who showed that embracing femininity was a way of commanding respect … So it's also a kind of power dressing."

Similarly, Niamh Galea draws on period details not to emulate the societal status of Victorian women, but to a story that pushed against the flatness of modernity. Her eponymous label is a curious synthesis of Y2K-Victorian-internet-age fashion: frilled dresses and skin-tight breeches, velour boleros and lace-trimmed bunny ears. In a world where efficiency is value and screens flatten and digitise our experience, Galea draws on the texture and decadence of the past. She says her favourite pieces have an element of the redundant or the needlessly decorative about them. Take the pair of pink dotted bloomers she designed: "They're [for] a romantic person who likes to bring fantasy into every day; they wear them to the coffee shop to write in their diary or to read a book lying on the grass in the park."

In this new period revival, history becomes a kind of costume box, a place to dig around in and take from, a site of whimsy and discovery. As Orlando says at one point in Woolf's novel, "I'm sick to death of this particular self. I want another." Is there any better way of finding another self than by trying on a new dress?

THE SILVER SCREEN

Our favourite shows and films have also embraced period dressing, although they too can't escape the anachronism shown on the runways. Each season, *Bridgerton* flies more and more brazenly in the face of historical faithfulness when it comes to costuming. Society darlings titter in gel manicures and full blowouts to the dulcet sounds of Ariana Grande. The necklines are sexed-up, the colours canary-bright.

It's a mantle that's been taken up by *Wuthering Heights,* Emerald Fennell's film adaptation of the Emily Brontë novel that gleefully tears up the rulebook. Two-time Oscar winner Jacqueline Durran outfits Margot Robbie, our generation's Cathy, in coloured sunglasses, milk-maid corsetry and a wedding-night gown that looks like iridescent cellophane, finished with a bright bow around her waist. "It's a costume and you know it's a costume — and it's not necessarily realistic or unrealistic," Durran has said of Cathy's looks.

And there's plenty of period dressing to come: new adaptations of Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* will hit screens later in 2026 and will no doubt bring with them empire waists and neck frills galore.



GETTY IMAGES; IMAXTREE; NETFLIX; WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Signs of ageing

LUCIANNE TONTI NOTICED SOMETHING PECULIAR IN FASHION'S LATEST COLLECTIONS THAT LOOKS SET TO CONTINUE NEXT SEASON AND PERMEATE THE WORLD AT LARGE: OLD IS IN

At Prada's autumn/winter 2026 menswear show in Milan, it was like something bad had happened to the clothes on the runway. Exaggerated shirt cuffs were splashed with mouldy, coffee-coloured stains; others looked like they'd been singed in an ironing mishap. The coats were classic Prada silhouettes — narrow macs and knee-length trenches — but every so often, one appeared crumpled, its outer layer flaking away to reveal a herringbone pattern beneath. Hats looked like they'd been run over — dirty, with brims bent at odd angles. Leather coats and bombers were crinkled; zips rippled with the heat and wear of use.

The collection was titled Before and Next. With it, Raf Simons and Miuccia Prada marked the arrival of the 'worn look'. In fashion circles, an appreciation for wearing high-quality garments and accessories with the patina of longform use has been simmering away for a while. Although Prada was presenting new clothes, it made the concept luxurious. In doing so, the house invited us to look at the clothes we already own with a different eye. The show notes read: "A persistence of universal human values, values of civilisation — culture, meaning, intelligence, care — may be conveyed through clothes. Carrying impressions of life, they underscore the significance of duration."

For a long time — as long as fast fashion has made it affordable — style has been shiny, flawless and new. We have been living in the Kardashianification of the world where ageing and its signs are things to be ashamed of and erased. But as the news cycle whirs with increasing speed through seemingly existential crises and the only world order most of us have ever known is turned on its head, Simons and Prada are asking us to look deeper, to think about what it means to be alive and dressed. They prompt us to ask: what can we build from what we have learnt?

The shift towards wearing things that have been *lived in* became undeniable in July 2025, when the original Hermès Birkin sold at auction for $14.8 million. *The New York Times* said the bag, designed for Jane Birkin in 1984, "looks as if it might have been found in a shipwreck". Its handles are frayed, its leather patina is mottled, it has marks from where she had stuck Doctors Without Borders and UNICEF stickers. Nail clippers dangled from it like the trinkets she used to attach to it.

QUALITY HAS TO BE THE PRECURSOR TO THE 'WORN LOOK'

The Birkin sale was record breaking. It fetched a higher price than Emperor Napoleon I's hat and Princess Diana's sheep sweater. Searches for second-hand Birkins skyrocketed, with resale platforms 1stDibs and ReSee reporting such

The Hermès Birkin only gets better with age, as evidenced by an increase in demand on the resale market.

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HISTORY IN THE MAKING

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According to Rachel Tashjian, CNN's senior style reporter and author of the idiosyncratic newsletter *Opulent Tips*, this new embrace of vintage is intellectual. "You appreciate what came before you, what's considered antique, what has patina, what has an evocative story," she says. The look is "somehow a little worn in or a little down at the heel. We're seeing women like the Olsen twins wear things over and over. Maybe there's a frayed hem or the fit isn't perfect. The idea is you're living an amazing life and you're letting that show in the things that you own. I think that's really appealing to people."

The other place Tashjian has noted a shift towards clothing of substance was at Matthieu Blazy's debut show for Chanel last October. The spring/summer 2026 collection was composed of pieces that moved beautifully, but Tashjian found she couldn't capture this in photos on her phone.

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ORIGINAL BIRKIN BAG

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Jane Birkin died after a struggle with cancer in 2023 having truly lived an incredibly interesting life. She starred in European cinema, had an artistic love affair with the singer Serge Gainsbourg, was an activist for women's and LGBTQI+ rights, and defined the female sexuality of the 1970s. That her personal style continues to resonate is intriguing. She refused plastic surgery on her face at a time when tweakments had never been more prolific. She carried herself with a nonchalance, freedom and playfulness that's long been absent from today's

LUXURY'S NEW PEDIGREE IS NOT PERFECTION, BUT A LIFE BOLDLY AND VISIBLY LIVED.

she says. "And I kept picking up my phone to take video and pictures of it and it just wasn't coming across. I was like, *I can't get a good picture. What's going on?* And I realised this is a feature and

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The Chanel S/S 2026 collection was difficult to photograph on the runway, but that was the whole point.



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The show was about you and your feelings — things you can't convey online or through a digital image. "That was the big takeaway from the Chanel show. I can see it dissipating throughout culture," Tashjian says. "How you feel and how you want to look becomes much more important than something you're presenting online."

These are clothes for the post-Instagram world. Made with thoughtful construction that privileges the wearer. To achieve this, they have the markers of vintage manufacturing: French seams, silk lining, deep, sturdy pockets and clever structure in shoulders and waistbands that allows for movement and the body's fluctuations. Clothes that you wear over and over again, that you keep for years, that become shaped by your habits, proclivities and preferences. In many ways, quality has to be the precursor to the 'worn look'; you cannot wear in a garment that shrivels after the first wash or holds onto stains because it's made of polyester. Although at Prada, a vintage patina was applied to new garments, the concept itself was more profound: clothing is beautiful when it is lived in and changed as a result — leather touched until it's soft and filmy, a cotton T-shirt worn thin, a hat so loved the stitching breaks.

In the past 30 years, the quality of clothing has significantly declined. Synthetic materials like polyester and nylon have dominated the market since the 1990s. Alongside manufacturing being moved offshore and the rise of ultra-fast fashion, clothing is now being produced as quickly and cheaply as possible, meaning quality is increasingly hard to find. Turning to vintage is one way to overcome this. The clothes of the past contain markers — like dense cloth and an attention to detail — that are absent from new garments. This is one of the driving forces behind the moment vintage fashion has been having for the past several years.

A 2025 report from Boston Consulting Group found the second-hand and luxury market is growing three times faster than the first-hand market. This success is driven by removing the pain points from purchasing and selling vintage clothes online, while bricks-and-mortar second-hand and consignment stores have done the same for retail. According to a recent report from Vestiaire Collective, one in three buyers use the digital platform to source unique, hard-to-find items, with searches for vintage up 40 per cent year-on-year in 2023, amounting to almost a quarter of a million. Increasingly, they are being used to find archival pieces and garments from a long time ago.

Aside from the desire for the aesthetic — the sullied cuffs and weathered coats at Prada — shopping second-hand comes with significant environmental benefits. In addition to mitigating the 200,000 tonnes of textiles Australians send to landfill every year, extending the life of a garment reduces its environmental impact in other ways.

According to an article from the *Journal of Circular Economy*, buying second-hand over new results in up to 42 per cent lower impacts on climate change and cumulative energy demand, 42–53 per cent for freshwater eutrophication and 35–53 per cent for water scarcity footprint per use. According to WRAP, extending the life of 50 per cent of clothing for nine months would result in savings of eight per cent of carbon emissions, 10 per cent of water usage and four per cent of waste.

WRAP also reports that buying a second-hand pair of jeans online instead of buying a brand-new pair could save more than 30 kilograms of CO2e, equivalent to making 600 cups of tea. Buying a second-hand pair of trainers online instead of brand-new ones could save more than 12 kilograms of CO2e, equivalent to streaming on-demand television for almost 10 days.

For decades, our rate of consumption has been ramping up. We now consume more clothes than ever and keep them for a shorter length of time. Since 2000, global fibre production has more than doubled, mirroring patterns of clothing consumption. Now, we keep our clothes for half as long as we did two decades ago. Alongside this, we have become increasingly online, our brains addled by algorithms, doomscrolling and the speed of dopamine hits from both validation seeking and online shopping.

> "HOW YOU FEEL AND HOW YOU WANT TO LOOK BECOMES MORE IMPORTANT THAN SOMETHING YOU'RE PRESENTING ONLINE"
>
> **– RACHEL TASHJIAN**

The 'worn look' could be the first place of respite; a sign we are growing exhausted of our own consumption habits and are ready to emerge from the brain fog. Here, there is an opportunity to pay attention to an old calling, a desire to be still and present; to look for something tangible and communal that makes us feel alive.

Maybe it starts with wearing a 20-year-old handbag that exhibits the markers of real-world friction and endurance — water marks from an unexpected thunderstorm, scuffs from an overhead locker on a flight, a hidden pocket of crumpled ticket stubs.

Maybe our embrace of vintage patinas means we are moving away from the digital world that facilitates fashion produced and consumed at hype-speed. But more than that, it just might mean we have finally remembered how serious, frivolous, decadent and exciting it is to be a human being, changed by the ups and downs of life.

GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI

FROM TOP Louis Vuitton Alzer 60, Alzer 70, Alzer 80 and Alzer 90 Monogram.



A MONOGRAM ODYSSEY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTHUR DELLOYE
STYLED BY ALEXANDRA BERNARD
WORDS BY CAROLINE HAMELLE

FROM ITS VERY BEGINNINGS, THE MONOGRAM HAS BEEN A PIONEERING IDEA COMBINING ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND A SYMBOL OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF LOUIS VUITTON'S CREATIONS. TODAY, THE HOUSE CELEBRATES 130 YEARS OF ITS LEGENDARY CANVAS – A TRUE PIECE OF POP CULTURE HISTORY THAT TRANSCENDS TRENDS AND ERAS

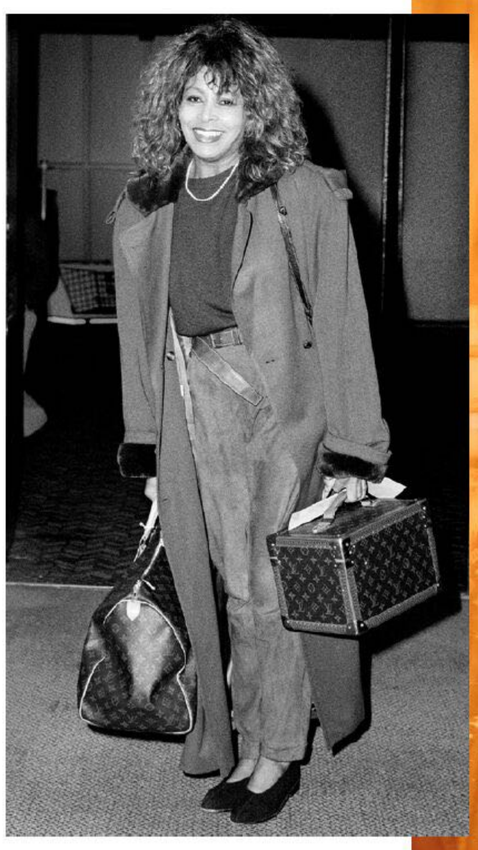
FROM LEFT Louis Vuitton Alzer 80 Monogram, Monogram Anniversary collection Keepall Trunk 45 Monogram Origine Ebène, Monogram Anniversary collection Speedy Trunk 20 Monogram Origine Ebène, Monogram Anniversary collection Speedy Soft 30 Time Trunk and Monogram Anniversary collection Speedy Bandoulière 20 Monogram Origine Vert Asnières.

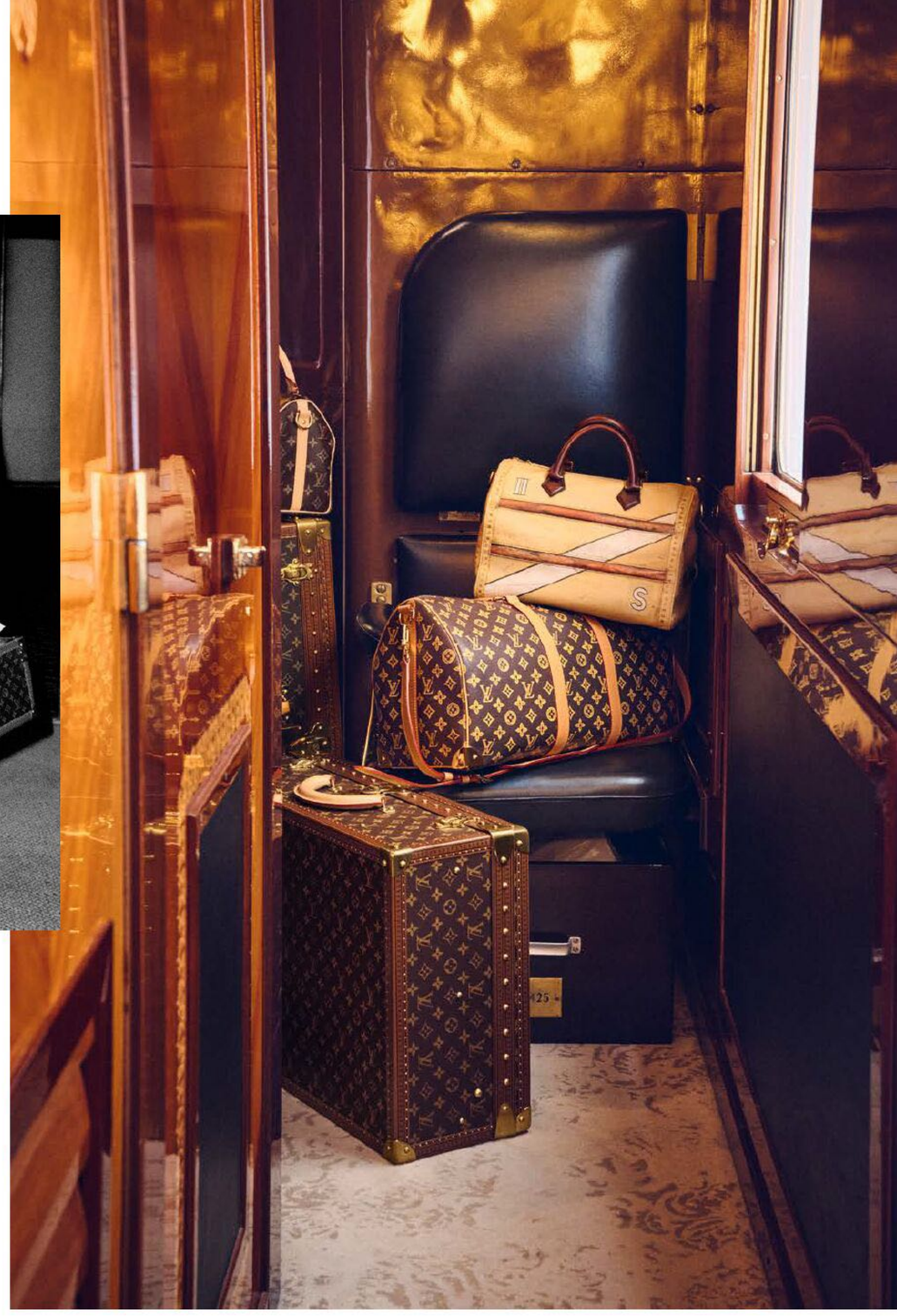
Where does inspiration come from? Most ideas arise from the careful observation of everyday life. A small, insignificant detail that we see every day eventually catches our attention and becomes the starting point for something bigger. This may have been the case when Georges Vuitton, son of Louis Vuitton, founder of the eponymous fashion house, created the famous Monogram.

This now-iconic pattern, which has stood the test of time to become a staple of pop culture in 2026, was originally designed to protect the French fashion house from counterfeiting. The year is 1896, and Louis Vuitton has been dead for four years. Georges continues the family luggage-making business with a renewed desire to stand out. This leads him to design a very distinctive Monogram: two intertwined LV initials accompanied by flowers and stars with geometric lines. While he positioned the four-petalled flowers and initials with precision, he gave no indication of his inspiration.

Given the historical context, it is thought that he was influenced by neo-gothic ornamentation, as four-petalled flowers are common in churches. Other inspiration came from Japonism, a movement that emerged with the opening up of the Land of the Rising Sun to the world, which influenced Western artists and writers. Another, more pragmatic explanation can be found in the kitchen tiles of the house in Asnières, headquarters of Louis Vuitton, featuring thistles, four-petalled flowers and the instantly recognisable diamond pattern. The kitchen has been remodelled since the family moved out, but ceramic tiles, signed by the famous Gien pottery, have been reused to re-create this room during travelling exhibitions. This heritage was preserved thanks to Joséphine Vuitton, Georges' wife, who lived in the house until she was 103 years old without ever carrying out any renovation work. Perhaps it was from the daily ritual of Georges drinking his morning coffee that one of the most recognisable contemporary motifs was born.

If this Monogram is being celebrated in 2026, it's because it also bears witness to the inventiveness of this illustrious house, marked by the very history of Louis, who left his native Jura in 1836 at the age of 14 for Paris. Hired as an apprentice by a trunk maker and packer, the young Louis learnt how to protect the belongings of the world's elite as they travelled. "It was the dawn of the train and tourism, and people were travelling to the mountains and the sea," fashion historian Xavier Chaumette says.





FROM TOP LEFT Louis Vuitton Keepall 55 Monogram, Alzer 80 Monogram, Alzer 70 Monogram, Monogram Anniversary collection Keepall Trunk 45 Monogram Origine Ebène and Monogram Anniversary collection Speedy Soft 30 Time Trunk.

"WHEN LOUIS VUITTON STARTED HIS BUSINESS, HE QUICKLY SOUGHT TO DIFFERENTIATE HIMSELF FROM THE COMPETITION"

– PIERRE-LOUIS VUITTON

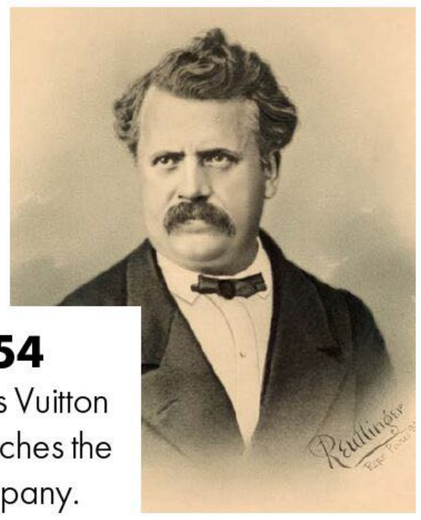


Famous fans of the Louis Vuitton Monogram include Tina Turner (top), Audrey Hepburn (left) and Catherine Deneuve.





LEFT, FROM TOP Louis Vuitton Monogram Anniversary collection Alma BB Monogram Origine Rose Ruban, Monogram Anniversary collection Nano Noé Monogram Origine Ebène and Monogram Anniversary collection Alma BB Monogram Origine Bleu Courrier. **BELOW** Joan Collins travels in style.



1854
Louis Vuitton launches the company.



1

2

1959
Introduction of the first Monogram collection on coated canvas, including the Noé and the Speedy.



4

2001
Stephen Sprouse is the first artist invited to work on the Monogram, tagging the Monogram canvas for the occasion.

THE MONOGRAM THROUGH THE YEARS ...



1896
Georges Vuitton (son of Louis) creates the Monogram.



1997
Marc Jacobs is named artistic director, leading to the arrival of the Monogram Vernis.



3

2003
Marc Jacobs gives Takashi Murakami carte blanche.



5

"IT'S A LOGO THAT HAS A FUNCTION, AN ORIGIN, BUT IT ALSO HAS GREAT DECORATIVE VALUE"

– LUCA MARCHETTI

1 Louis Vuitton Noé Monogram **2** Louis Vuitton Speedy 25 Monogram **3** Louis Vuitton Steamer Bag Violet Vernis **4** Louis Vuitton Keepall 50 Monogram Graffiti Fuchsia **5** Louis Vuitton Petit Noé Monogram Multicolour White **6** Louis Vuitton Petite Malle **7** Louis Vuitton Punching Bag PM Monogram **8** Louis Vuitton Alma BB Monogram Origine Bleu Courrier **9** Louis Vuitton Speedy Trunk 20 Monogram Origine Ebène.



6

2013

Nicolas Ghesquière, as the new artistic director, unveils his first Monogrammed bag, the Petite Malle.



7

2014

The Celebrating Monogram project is launched for the brand's 160th anniversary with Frank Gehry, Rei Kawakubo, Cindy Sherman and Karl Lagerfeld.

"This was also the beginning of the colonies, with some people travelling to Africa and India. Trunks were used as luggage and were often made to suit what people wanted to transport, as clothing in the 19th century was complicated. People had to change clothes often and have outfits for each specific time of day."

When Louis Vuitton launched his company in 1854, his trunks were grey like everyone else's. They were identified by the discreet 'LV' logo found on some of the metal handles. "When he started his business, he quickly sought to differentiate himself from the competition. He wanted to be the best," says Pierre-Louis Vuitton, a sixth-generation descendant of the house's founder, still alive today. Louis began by offering flat trunks — at the time, the lids of trunks were curved, making them impossible to stack. To further distinguish himself, Louis created the striped canvas in 1872 and the Damier in 1888. Then came the house's Monogram, hand-painted on jacquard-woven linen canvas, which was to become the most popular of them all. "It's quite an ingenious invention," Chaumette says. "Louis Vuitton was one of the first to turn the Monogram into a pattern that could be used to both conceal and highlight its designs, while also protecting them at a time when idea theft was rampant."

This was followed by a period of research and development during which the Monogram was refined using a stencil technique, then was printed on more resistant pegamoid-coated canvas.

Time passed and contemporary society changed. "In the 1950s and 1960s, with the advent of aviation, hand luggage and suitcases appeared, as trunks were much more difficult to take on board," Chaumette says. The French fashion house innovated once again and developed another coated canvas, the famous Monogram canvas we know today. More flexible and resistant, it doesn't crack like the previous fabric when used to make, say, a Speedy or a Keepall. "The logo began to appear despite the codes of the time, which dictated that the signature of what one was carrying should be hidden," Chaumette says. "However, it remained for a long time the preserve of Louis Vuitton and luggage makers."

Popularised by actors such as Audrey Hepburn and Catherine Deneuve in the 1960s and 1970s, the Monogram became a staple among the world's rich and powerful, and the brand conquered new markets, such as Japan. "Today, it is one of those brand symbols that can be distorted, stretched, expanded, destroyed ... LV, this signature, this name, is so strong that it no longer constrains the brand to be consistent," says semiotics expert Luca Marchetti, lecturer at Sorbonne Nouvelle University in Paris.

So how did the Monogram manage to transcend the world of travel to become a worldwide cultural icon? "It's a logo that has a function, an origin, but it also has great decorative value," Marchetti says. "These two letters have become a sign, a graphic architecture that lends itself very well to the play of all-over patterns. The LV logo is so identifiable today that almost no-one says Louis Vuitton anymore — they say LV."

At the end of the 1990s, the late CEO Yves Carcelle saw art as a new opportunity. To mark its centenary celebrations, the fashion house invited designers and artists, including Vivienne Westwood and Azzedine Alaïa, to revisit the Monogram. Then, in 1997, Marc Jacobs, a 33-year-old New Yorker steeped in counterculture and a keen art collector, became the artistic director of Louis Vuitton's men's and women's collections. The



8 9

2026

The house unveils its new Monogram Anniversary collection through three limited-edition capsules.



designer furthered these artistic collaborations. In 2001, the canvas became a medium for visual artist Stephen Sprouse, who superimposed his monochrome, hand-painted graffiti onto it. In 2003, Takashi Murakami was invited to play with the legendary canvas. The Japanese artist repainted the brown and beige Monogram in a myriad of shades. *The New York Times* wrote in 2008 that this collaboration generated sales of several hundred million dollars. Yet, as Pierre-Louis Vuitton recalls, "It was a real technical challenge because there were 26 different colours, each of which required a single print run on the canvas. The slightest misalignment meant that the entire canvas had to be thrown away."

ABOVE, FROM LEFT
Louis Vuitton Alzer 60 Monogram, Monogram Anniversary collection Keepall Trunk 45 Monogram Origine Ebène and Monogram Anniversary collection Noe Time Trunk.

Over time, other contemporary artists — such as Richard Prince in 2008, Yayoi Kusama in 2012 and 2023, and Jeff Koons in 2017 — have amalgamated their own vision with the iconic aesthetics of the Monogram, further establishing these bags as something exceptional.

Throughout 2026, Louis Vuitton will be celebrating 130 years of the Monogram with a series of activations, new collections and dedicated window displays, starting with a tribute to its most beloved creations: the Speedy, the Keepall, the Noé, the Alma and the Neverfull. The house is unveiling its new Monogram Anniversary collection through three limited-edition capsules, with unique pieces bearing an exclusive label. The first, Monogram Origine, inspired by the cover of a client registry found in its archives, revisits jacquard canvas in pastel shades. The second, VVN, pays tribute to the brand's leathergoods heritage, emphasising the quality of its natural cowhide leather and its artisanal finish. Finally, the last capsule, Time Trunk, plays on artistic illusion with *trompe-l'oeil* effects reproducing the textures and metallic details of its historic trunks.

It's a fitting celebration for a remarkable Monogram that, after having travelled alongside explorers and the bold and beautiful on carriage rides, ocean cruises, automobiles, planes, bicycles or simply on foot for 130 years already, will continue to accompany us on plenty more adventures in the future.



1 Louis Vuitton Alma PM Soft VVN, $7650 **2** Louis Vuitton Monogram Anniversary collection Alma BB Trunk Monogram Origine Ebène, $5650.

GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; COURTESY OF LOUIS VUITTON. WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO THE VENICE SIMPLON-ORIENT-EXPRESS, A BELMOND TRAIN, EUROPE

FROM TOP Louis Vuitton Monogram Anniversary collection Keepall Trunk 45 Monogram Origine Ebène, Alzer 60 Monogram, Alzer 70 Monogram, Alzer 80 Monogram and Alzer 90 Monogram.

style match

A PEEK INSIDE THE MOST STYLISH SUITE AT THE 2026 AUSTRALIAN OPEN

WORDS BY JESSICA BAILEY





For more than two decades, Ralph Lauren has defined courtside fashion for the world's biggest grand slam tournaments: the US Open since 2005, Wimbledon since 2006 and the Australian Open since 2021. This year, *ELLE* partnered with the official outfitter to host guests inside its stylish suite at Melbourne Park before enjoying an afternoon of world-class tennis.

With its navy and white colour palette, walls adorned with framed archival Ralph Lauren imagery and small gold desk lamps, the suite was almost as chic as the guests, which included tastemakers from the worlds of fashion, film, music and art. Fashion designers Courtney Zheng and Ruby Pedder joined musicians Jacoténe and Maina Doe, actor Andréa Solonge, artist Camille Olsen-Ormandy, tennis personality Morgan Riddle and beauty stars Rowi Singh, Kathleen Paton and Kirralee Thompson.

Each kept up with the day's dress code with their own unique takes on 'spectator style'. Pale blue cable knits were draped across the shoulders of some, and at the hips of others. Bold striped separates were pared back with breezy linen dresses, white shorts or washed denim pieces, and tweed blazers were effortlessly layered over chambray shirts and vests. Few houses have inspired courtside dressing quite like Ralph Lauren, firming the brand's position at the centre of heritage, fashion and sport.

DANIELLE CASTANO









OPPOSITE PAGE Model Achok Akoi (top) and beauty influencer Rowi Singh served style at the Australian Open suite. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Tennis personality Morgan Riddle nailed preppy-chic; the suite embodied Ralph Lauren's signature codes; singer Jacoténe gave stripes a cool-girl edge; singer-songwriter Maina Doe made a statement in double denim.



LEFT Native florals and gold lamps brought an intimate feel to each table. **RIGHT** Model Emma Kate Boyd and designer Courtney Zheng took jeans and a blazer to a new level.

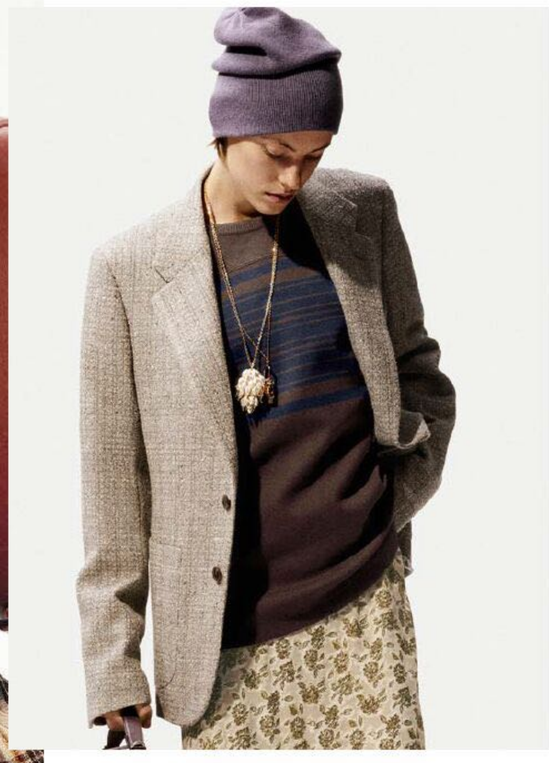




Weekend



Loro Piana spring/summer 2026.







Loewe bag, price on application.

Carry: Loewe Amazona 180

Despite not knowing Jonathan Anderson's exact measurements, we do know Loewe's new creative directors, Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez, had some of the largest shoes to fill in fashion after Anderson's departure. But the ex-Proenza Schouler duo are starting strong: their just-launched design, the Amazona 180, is an oversized, single-handle version of the house's iconic style, and has already found a place on many an editor's wish list.

Visit: Loro Piana's first boutique

For a sojourn to Piedmont without needing a passport, take to Westfield Sydney's fourth level where the master of Italian quiet luxury, Loro Piana, has just opened its first Australian boutique. Inside, you'll find the label's S/S 2026 collection — and get to feel the famously sumptuous fibres for yourself.

GETTY IMAGES; LUCAS DAWSON; COURTESY OF THE BRANDS. WORDS BY DIVYA VENKATARAMAN



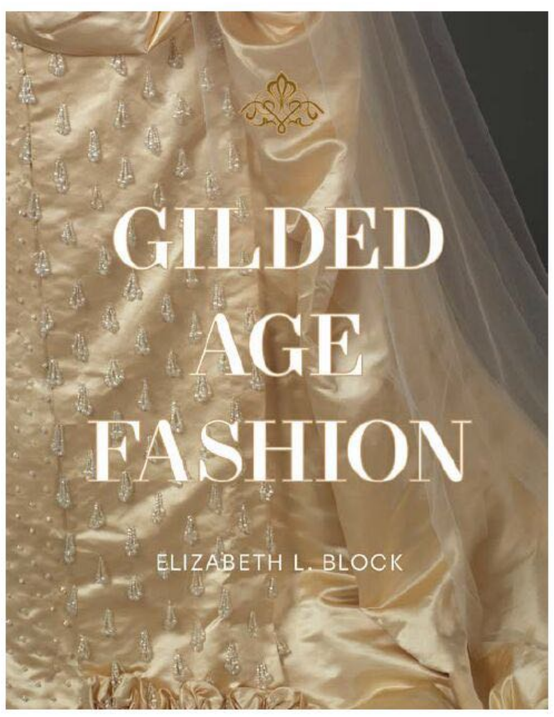
Juju Vera's cult necklace featuring a silk tassel.

Wear: Tassels



Juju Vera necklace, $950.

Art deco details are fringing the outfits of It-girls around the world. To get into the swing of the trend without crossing over into full curtain-holder territory, try a tassel necklace. Look to Australian designer Monika Ruggerino's silk pendants dotted with glinting diamonds, designed to be worn on a matching silk cord or a belcher chain. Or try on Juju Vera's antique-look pieces (the label comes Gwyneth Paltrow-approved).



Read: Gilded Age Fashion

Besotted by HBO's *The Gilded Age*? Art historian Elizabeth Block's illustrated tome goes deep into the indulgence and the finery of late-1800s New York. It's not just dresses, though; the book also looks at the era's social scene in detail, from the Rockefellers to the Vanderbilts, and their sway on fashion.

Gilded Age Fashion by Elizabeth Brock (Hardie Grant, $39.99), out March 31.



The Beare Park show at Australian Fashion Week 2025.

See: Australian Fashion Week 2026

The brick walls of Carriageworks will once again be filling your Instagram feed: Australian Fashion Week will be taking over the Sydney location from May 11 to 15, and it's set to be bigger and glitzier than ever. Media, buyers, designers, content creators and aspirants will gather for talks, shows and events – plus a whole lot of fashion-watching.

A NEW CURVE

SEVENTY-FOUR YEARS AFTER A DRESS DEFINED A SILHOUETTE, DIOR GIVES ITS STORY NEW LIFE

WORDS BY SARAH NOONAN



In the early decades of the 20th century, women's clothes were designed to signal propriety before anything else. Waists were corseted, skirts skimmed the ankle and elegance was measured in restraint. Even as hemlines rose in the '20s and silhouettes softened in the '30s, fashion remained governed by a careful balance of discipline and decorum.

The war years disrupted that order entirely. Rationing and utility dressing reduced wardrobes to necessity, stripping fashion of excess. By the early 1950s, women were learning how to dress again. Couture houses were flourishing, and designers like Christian Dior were shaping a new vision of femininity, one defined by volume and renewed abundance. His dresses restored a sense of grandeur to daily life.

Among them was La Cigale, unveiled in Dior's autumn/winter 1952 collection. Structured at the bodice and flowing through layers of moiré, its silhouette captured the confidence of post-war couture. Decades later, it would become the most enduring point of reference for Jonathan Anderson, Dior's current creative director, who describes it as his "favourite dress of all in the history of fashion".





RIGHT Showing a meticulous level of craftsmanship, the Dior Cigale is prepared for the assembly of the flap's metal parts before the edges are dyed.
BELOW The La Cigale dress, designed by Christian Dior.



For spring/summer 2026, that reference takes form in the Dior Cigale bag. Its silhouette borrows directly from the dress: a curved body that tapers at the centre to ensure it maintains its shape without slouching. The handle sits close to the body for everyday wear, while a subtle bow anchors the front, proving that finer details really can do all the talking.

To work with history at this level requires fluency as much as imagination. With the Cigale, Anderson demonstrates both. And just like that, a Dior icon finds its next life.

Dior Cigale bag, $8700.

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ELLE

shopping



LEAN IN

The cooler months won't be denied, so we suggest infusing your autumn wardrobe with hints of spring; *ELLE*'s accessory edit is perfect for after-dark adventures; and the bag you're about to see everywhere.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDER COOKE **STYLED BY** JORDAN BOORMAN

SPRING FORWARD

DRESS FOR THE SEASON YOU WANT, NOT THE SEASON YOU HAVE WITH PRETTY FLORALS, FUN TEXTURES AND GARDEN-INSPIRED COLOURS

HELLO, PETAL

A floral skirt and pussy-bow blouse once would have sounded dowdy. Not so in 2026, when the florals are distorted, the skirt is mini and the shoes are an event in themselves.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDER COOKE
STYLED BY JORDAN BOORMAN



1



2



3



OPPOSITE PAGE Dior shirt, $3600, skirt, $4600, necktie, $1450, and shoes, $3000. **THIS PAGE** Fendi jacket, $5920, skirt, $2300, and shoes, $1820; H&M bralette, $44.99.



4



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6

BLOCK WORK

Colour blocking needn't be overwhelming. Focus on solid chunks of colour in smaller doses (on your shoes, your bag, a jacket) for a show-stealing-but-not-OTT moment.

1 Pinko jacket, $626, from Farfetch **2** Marc Jacobs top, $465 **3** Magda Butrym briefs, $2680, from Mytheresa **4** Revolve shoes, $337 **5** Balyck earrings, $350 **6** Khaite bag, $4990.



Celine bag, $3350; H&M pants, $129. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Acne Studios jacket, $1400, and pants, $1250; Alias Mae shoes, $249.95.



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BIG BAG THEORY

There's wearing, and then there's *styling*. The latter means playing and daring to go against the status quo. If you don't want to wear your bag as a top, though, a floaty pastel number is just as good.

1 Wolf & Badger brooch, $345 **2** Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello sunglasses, $815 **3** Zimmermann top, $850, from Moda Operandi **4** Miu Miu skirt, $1020, from Moda Operandi **5** COS bag, $266 **6** St. Agni shoes, $499.

FOR THE FRILL OF IT

Looking for a fresh take on double denim? A matching floral jeans and jacket set – with a subtle frill hem – gets you 10/10 sartorial points.

FLOWER SHOW

Cooler days call for layers. Opt for long sleeves, and try tucking your scarf underneath instead of wrapping it over the top – a great outfit deserves to be seen.



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OPPOSITE PAGE
Miu Miu top, price on application, and scarf, $1040. **THIS PAGE**
Rose Guiffre dress, price on application; H&M Studio top, $99.99; Bianca Spender top, $435 (worn underneath); Rollie Nation shoes, $259.95.



6



7

ALL THE FEELS

Sure, subtle texture is all well and good, but have you tried making it the main event? Balance your statement piece with satisfyingly smooth accessories.

1 Valentino Garavani scarf, $370
2 Simkhai top, $750 **3** H&M pants, $43 **4** Phoebe Philo shoes, $1320
5 Tiffany & Co. ring, $6500 **6** Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello belt, $580
7 Christopher Esber bag, $990.



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LAYER CAKE

A pop of red has been a fashion mainstay for the past few seasons and is showing signs of going absolutely nowhere. Add a crisp high-collared shirt and soft suedes, keeping legs bare for those unpredictable transseasonal days.

1 Isabel Marant earrings, $417 **2** Anine Bing shirt, $419 **3** Van Der Kooij skirt, $449 **4** Christopher Esber shoes, $1195 **5** Acne Studios bag, $2450 **6** Courtney Zheng shirt, $465.

Model: Sabine Glud at Chic Management. Hair by Darren Summors at AP–Reps, makeup by Carly Lim at Hart & Co. Set design by Jasmine Christie at Hart & Co.

COLOUR CHAMELEON

Prada's vibrant green pleated-skirt dress worn over a blue-grey work shirt and paired with elbow-length satin opera gloves in a pretty shade of pale purple is a masterclass in eclectic yet cohesive dressing.

OPPOSITE PAGE
H&M jacket, $549; Blanca cardigan, $280; Bianca Spender shirt, $425; Courtney Zheng shorts, $800; Chanel shoes, $2190.
THIS PAGE Prada dress, $8700, shirt, $2180, gloves, $2180, and shoes, $1950.

WORDS BY ALEXANDRA ENGLISH

TO HAVE & TO HOLD

The It bag of 2026 is here: Celine's Phantom. This Brick shade, rendered in supple chocolate brown lambskin leather, goes well with anything – even black.

Aje tops, $279, and $249 (worn underneath), skirt, $199, and briefs, price on application; Celine bag, $6900; Balyck earrings, $360; bangles, on model's left arm, from left: Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello, price on application; Cleopatra's Bling, $449, and $459; on model's right arm: Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello, all price on application.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Hermès top and skirt, both price on application; stylist's own shoes (similar shoes available at H&M).

YOU'VE GOT LOVE TO MOVE



FANCY FOOTWORK

Cheer on your best fashion choices with pompom-adorned heels that add a punch of pep to any look.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDER COOKE **STYLED BY** JORDAN BOORMAN

WHETHER IT'S AN ELEGANT EVENING OR A SWEATY DANCE FLOOR, THE BEST ACCESSORIES OF SPRING/SUMMER 2026 ARE READY FOR ANY OCCASION

HATCHING PLANS

Is it a bag or is it art? (Or is it food?) Chanel's couture creation is part clutch, part sculpture (and not at all edible, delicious as it may be). Made with resin and metal, it's at once delicate and demanding of attention.

Chanel shoes, $2190, and bag, $45,730.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Blanca dress, $420; Balyck earrings, $370; model's own stud earring.

BIG EARRING ENERGY

Bye-bye, discreet studs; see ya, tiny diamonds; and hello, fabulous firework pearl earrings. Wear them solo or as a pair — there's no such thing as too much when it comes to adorning your ears. And don't hold back with your hair or outfit.

THE EYES HAVE IT

Oversized aviator sunglasses are back in a big way for spring/summer 2026, and it's easy to see why. For an instant injection of 'tude, just add shades. (Side note: leather gloves don't hurt, either.)



DANCING SHOES

Sequins and strings of beads aren't only for bags. Gucci brings 'sole' to the party with bedazzled heels that are ready to hit the dance floor.

OPPOSITE PAGE Sportmax top, $1215; stylist's own bra; H&M sunglasses, $35; Noah the Label gloves, $110. **THIS PAGE** Gucci stockings, $400, and shoes, $6750.

Model: Morgan Fernandez at Priscillas. Hair by Darren Summors at AP–Reps; makeup by Carly Lim at Hart & Co.

WORDS BY ALEXANDRA ENGLISH

The Piece

GRAB BAG

WITH ITS LONG HANDLES, ROOMY SIZE OPTIONS AND DAY-TO-NIGHT EASE, THE BORSETTO (A MASHUP OF 'BAG' AND 'HORSEBIT' IN ITALIAN) PROVES PRACTICAL CAN STILL BE FABULOUS

Gucci bag, $4250.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAKE TERREY
STYLED BY PATRICK ZACZKIEWICZ



JAKE TERREY IS REPRESENTED BY HART & CO

ELLE

reads



JORDAN KIRK / XINGERXANGER



WEAVING HER WAY

AHEAD OF A STRING OF NEW PROJECTS AND A MAJOR LIFE MILESTONE, SAMARA WEAVING IS STEPPING INTO HER BIGGEST YEAR YET

WORDS BY SARAH NOONAN

Before *Ready or Not* became a cult classic — and before teenage kids everywhere were dressing up as her blood-soaked fictional character for Halloween — Samara Weaving's manager was standing in the middle of a Los Angeles shopping centre trying to give away tickets to strangers.

"We just didn't think anyone would want to see it," Weaving says over Zoom, laughing at the memory. When the film was released in 2019, expectations were low. It was niche for its genre, the tone was hard to pin down and the whole thing felt like a bit of a gamble. And then, it blew up. "I think [the film's success] means there's so many freaks like me out there who are obsessed with really weird, offbeat comedy horror," Weaving says, laughing again.

She's dialling into our chat from her home in Los Angeles, cool and casual in an oversized hoodie, and speaking with a warmth that makes you forget, briefly, that you're talking to a movie star. Despite nearly two decades on screen, and a résumé that now includes breakout horror hits such as *Scream VI* and *The Babysitter*, alongside prestige television like *Nine Perfect Strangers*, she talks about her success in a way that feels unusually candid, quick to credit everyone else before acknowledging her own achievements.

It's a mindset that makes the scale of *Ready or Not*'s success feel almost

secondary — but it's also what makes returning to it now feel so special. Nearly seven years later, Weaving returns as Grace, the scrappy, bloodied heroine being hunted by her in-laws, a part that proved why she's become one of the most compelling actors of all Australia's exports. Only this time, the sequel, *Ready or Not 2: Here I Come*, comes with a devoted fanbase and a level of expectation that didn't exist the first time around — something she admits makes her nervous. "There was no pressure when the movie came out the first time because no-one had heard of it," she says. "Now … I just want to make sure [the fans] are happy with it."

Keenly aware of how much the character means to people, and how rare it is for an obscure genre film to take on a life of its own, emotions were high that first day on set. Slipping into the very same blood-soaked wedding gown Weaving had worn in the original, it all suddenly felt real again. "I remember the guys [directors Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett] came in to say hello and I'm standing in this dress and we're all getting weirdly emotional," she recalls. "We couldn't understand why we were crying about a woman wearing a blood-soaked dress."

Returning to the same crew she had bonded with during the first film added another layer of comfort to the experience. "I don't think any of us would have done it again if we didn't absolutely love each other," she says, adding that the shoots were particularly gruelling. "The nature of this film is we're running around in the cold in Toronto and it's two in the morning. You need to be around people willing to laugh at that, otherwise everyone's going to start crying."

That sense of community runs deep, not only in Weaving's career but in her personal life, too. It's something she learnt to prioritise early after moving to Los Angeles at just 19, with little more than ambition and a remarkably good sense of humour about the whole thing. "Hollywood is nuts," she says. Looking back now, she can see just how vulnerable she was in those early years. What protected her was a close-knit support system — a manager she still works with today, and a circle of friends who offered both perspective and stability.

Since then, her career has unfolded with almost disarming consistency. Without any single 'overnight' moment, Weaving has steadily built one of the most eclectic filmographies of any Australian in Hollywood, navigating everything from high-concept horror and broad comedy to intimate dramas. Along the way, she's found herself sharing sets with some of the industry's most recognisable faces, including Melissa McCarthy, Adam Brody and Nicole Kidman. And yet, she admits there are moments when she still gets a little wide-eyed.

In another upcoming project, the action-thriller *Over Your Dead Body*, she stars alongside Jason Segel, which was a particular pinch-me moment. "My 16-year-old self was freaking out," she says, admitting *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* is one of her favourite movies of all time. Between Segel, the legendary Juliette Lewis, Timothy Olyphant and director Jorma Taccone, the ensemble felt almost surreal. "I was like, *Who let me in on this? Who decided this was a good idea?*" she says, laughing. "I had to keep telling myself, *Don't be weird*."

It's a feeling she hasn't entirely outgrown — and, in some ways, doesn't want to. "I still get nervous walking onto set," she says. "But in a good way; in an *Oh, it means I care* sense." That nervousness, she believes, is what helps keep her present and curious when taking on roles that ask

"I STILL GET NERVOUS WALKING ONTO SET. BUT IN A GOOD WAY; IN AN *OH, IT MEANS I CARE* SENSE"





something more of her. One of the most meaningful in recent years was *Carolina Caroline*, a tender, radical love story that marked a departure from the high-octane intensity of much of her previous work. It pushed her into a more emotionally exposed register — something she says doesn't always come easily.

"I don't normally get sent those kinds of scripts," she says. "I try to make diverse choices, but sometimes the opportunities that are given to me … it's tough." When this one arrived, though, she couldn't put it down.

"IT'S A SIDE OF ME THAT NO-ONE REALLY SEES"

The role required a level of vulnerability that asked her to strip away the armour she'd cultivated in action and comedy work. "I think because it's plausible that [this narrative] would exist in my [real] life," she explains, "it was scary. Having to be like, *Oh, how do I flirt with boys again?* It's a side of me that no-one really sees."

Sharing the screen with Kyle Gallner, the chemistry between them is palpable, and it's this compatibility that gives the story its heart. "If you don't have that chemistry on camera, I don't know if you would have been rooting for them as much," she reflects. And she's right — making audiences fall in love with a lawless, pistol-wielding character is a skill only few can perfect. It's also a reminder of just how magnetic she is on-screen.

Off-screen, life is shifting, too. Among all her projects this year, the actor is preparing for a major personal milestone, welcoming her first child — a reality which finds her in a period of gentle recalibration. "It sounds like a lot," Weaving says, surveying her schedule, but you can tell she's quietly excited to lay low for a while. It's a new rhythm she's already learning to appreciate, and one we predict will be her most rewarding role yet.

Ready or Not 2: Here I Come *is in cinemas on March 19.*



The curse of the psychic

THEY AIM TO BRING CLARITY AND CERTAINTY TO OUR LIVES, BUT WHAT IF RATHER THAN JUST PREDICTING OUR FUTURES, PSYCHICS ARE ACTUALLY STEERING THEM?

WORDS BY RACHAEL AKHIDENOR

I remember it like it was yesterday. I booked this particular psychic after reading Google reviews left by women before me. They, like me, were seeking clarity and hope. They yearned for certainty — *some kind of certainty* — to light the dark abyss of adulthood and modern life. They went to him for many reasons: for love, for career, for family, for the self. He could see further into the future than we could. He gifted us the hope we couldn't provide ourselves.

Yet, as things go with particularly popular psychics, the wait time was long. I couldn't get a reading until six months on, when things had already shifted. Hope had arrived in the form of a new relationship; exciting and promising in the way new romances are in your mid-to-late twenties.

As I entered the psychic's home, my unease grew, but I ignored it. I'd already paid the fee and had waited months for the reading to eventuate. As he asked me about my life, my work, my relationships, he delivered insight that landed like a thud. "It won't work out," he told me as he peered at a photo of my new partner. "He loves in a transactional way," he continued, shaking his head. "This won't last."

My heart froze. The room fell silent, save for a sharp inhale. That sentence lodged itself inside me. It branded my intuition, tarnished my confidence and feasted on my insecurities for years to come. It glowed brighter in every argument, every fight and every disappointment, haunting me like a kind of curse.

> [THE PREDICTION] GLOWED BRIGHTER IN EVERY ARGUMENT ... HAUNTING ME LIKE A KIND OF CURSE

Psychologically, my experience was ruthlessly human. Negativity bias is part of the human condition; a cognitive bias that describes our tendency to favour negative information over anything positive or neutral. Its development was evolutionary. As Carly Dober, principal psychologist and founder of Enriching Lives Psychology, explains, "Our brain cares about our survival, and anything that might risk that is required to be easily retrieved in our memories."

Pair this with confirmation bias — the psychological

tendency to, as Dober explains, "seek out information that reinforces what we already think, instead of information that corrects or challenges us" — and the effect compounds.

It appears, anecdotally at least, that most women have seen a psychic. The volume of responses I received while researching this piece exceeded even my most generous expectations. In Australia alone, the online psychic reading market is forecast to reach close to $11 million by 2032, growing steadily at 6.26 per cent per annum.

Sarah-Jayne Kerr, a psychic and tarot reader based in Melbourne, has observed this shift firsthand. She left her stable corporate career after the demand for her work became impossible to ignore. "The decision wasn't made lightly," she says. "But it reflected a broader cultural shift I was witnessing: people questioning productivity, certainty and purely rational models of success. Periods of global instability, burnout and emotional fatigue tend to drive people inward."

Her clients tend to seek her out during moments of uncertainty; when something feels stalled, emotionally charged or unresolved.

For Rachel, 27, that moment came three years ago. She was feeling particularly lost in her career, searching for validation and reassurance that she was 'on the right path'. What she received was something else entirely. "When I visited this [one] psychic, I told her I wanted to work in fashion media. She said, and this is directly from my Notes app, 'You won't work directly in fashion, but it could be part of your role.'

"At first, I was distraught," she remembers. "How can you tell a person who has just started in her career, who has sacrificed her autonomy and taken up an unpaid internship to get her foot in the door, that her dreams will never materialise? She said it so nonchalantly, too."

For Gillian, 32, that uncertainty surfaced in her love life. She had two romantic interests: one who was her age, one who was two years older. After a tarot reader told her that her husband would be two years her senior, she swiftly entered a relationship with the older man. Unfortunately, this decision was ill-fated.

"I started seeing him through rose-coloured glasses," she recalls. "I think it made me tolerate things that I would not usually. And I definitely think I stayed in that relationship longer than I should have because I was hoping for something." Today, she is engaged to the man who was her age all along.

While things worked out for Gillian in the end, regret still lingers. "With my current partner, I feel we would have progressed further in our relationship had I not stayed with the man who was supposedly my future husband," she says. "That's one element of regret I have: being influenced, and not listening to my own intuition or my own heart."

The irony of these experiences is not lost on me. We sought clarity, but were left only with confusion, drifting further from certainty than we ever intended. Navigating life through this lens can be fraught. For Rachel, it means actively working to ensure the psychic's words don't take hold or harden into a premonition of what's to come.

"What I took from those sessions, more than anything, is that I tend to hold onto things very tightly," she says. "To stop being disappointed in myself, I've had to stop trying to control everything and let life come to me. I remind myself of this whenever I start thinking too much about the future, which is often, and I try to focus on the present. It isn't easy, but it has been valuable."

For me, the experience of seeing a psychic prompted a deeper interrogation of self-will and autonomy versus destiny and fate. In the hands of a responsible practitioner, these ideas are held in tension, not opposition. As Kerr explains, she does not see the future as fixed, but as a matter of probability, shaped by our attention, emotional states and habits. "Free will matters," she says. "Your choices shape the outcome."

And yet, knowing this in theory does not always make it easy to embody. For Bianca, 31, even the thought of a reading now provokes anxiety. "I haven't had one in ages," she says. "I'm happy in my career, I'm happy in my relationship; I don't want someone to say something that is going to make me spiral."

Still, in moments of vulnerability, the desire for relief is understandable. When the future feels unclear, certainty can be seductive, even when the cost is doubt that we didn't previously hold. Kerr is explicit about the boundary — a reading should strengthen someone's relationship with themselves, not replace it. "Healthy guidance expands awareness. It does not dictate outcomes."

My ex and I went on to date for almost four-and-a-half years. Last year in the spring, we broke up.

"THAT'S ONE REGRET I HAVE: BEING INFLUENCED, AND NOT LISTENING TO MY OWN INTUITION OR MY OWN HEART"
– GILLIAN



A psychic changed my life ...

When I was 20, I saw one of those $5 psychics at the back of a crystal shop on the basement level of a Westfield. You know the type: sitting behind a heavy red velvet curtain on a folding chair at a flimsy card table (it was the 2010s). He told me that I would have boy-girl twins. I wasn't even sure I wanted kids, and then when I was 34, I fell pregnant. One of the first things my mum said was, "I wonder if the psychic was right?" When I went for my eight-week scan, I joked that I was going to find out if there were two of them. Sure enough, there they were: twins. I had to wait until 20 weeks to find out the sex, but I just knew it would be one of each. When I finally had the morphology scan, yep: one boy, one girl. I often wonder where that psychic is now ...

MEGAN

I'm a sucker for a horoscope, a tarot card, a rune reading – anything. So when a psychic came into the office in 2020, I jumped at the chance for a reading. What she said has haunted me. She said a spirit told her that the next "significant event" in my life would take place in 15 years. She defined significant as a "birth, death, marriage, natural disaster or financial windfall or loss". I still think about it. Will I be dead now in less than 10 years – or will someone close to me die? Births still seem a long way away – and surely someone significant will be getting married soon. And what if that money 'event' is a financial disaster? It was such a specific date that I can't shake it. I'll get back to you in 2035 with an update. Hopefully.

MELISSA

Having a one-on-one with David the Medium was a surreal experience. He seemed to know everything about me – things no-one would be able to find out. He said my stepmother and aunt, both of whom had passed away, were in the room with me, and that my stepmother wanted to send me a sign to show me how much she is still around me. David said, "I am seeing a magpie." I told him a magpie didn't mean anything to me, but then on my way home, right near where my car was parked (and near my old home), was a magpie. It looked at me and walked (yes, walked) down the path to where my car was, then stood there for two or three minutes right near me. It felt like my stepmother had sent me a sign and was, for a moment, right there with me.

SALLY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI

CONSENT REVOLUTION

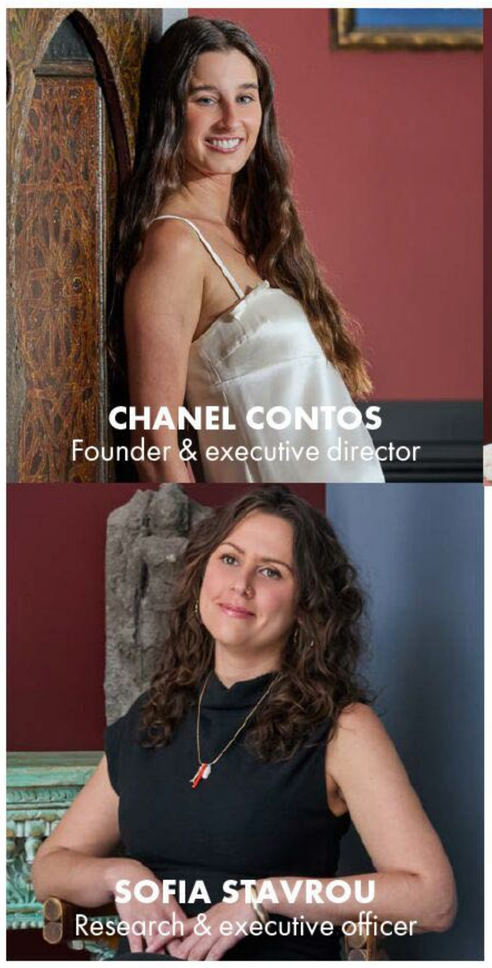
FIVE YEARS SINCE CHANEL CONTOS LAUNCHED HER TRAILBLAZING TEACH US CONSENT CAMPAIGN, SHE AND HER TEAM REFLECT ON THEIR BIG WINS, LESSONS LEARNT AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

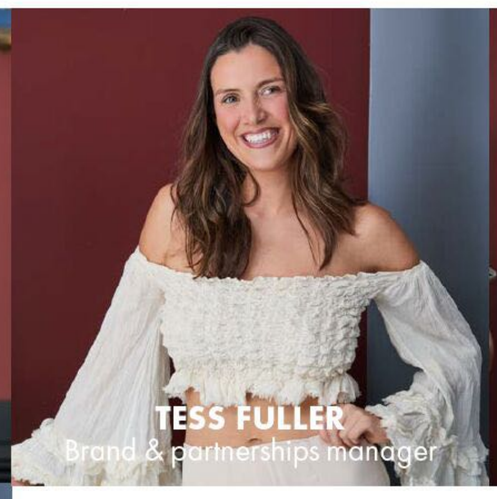
INTERVIEW BY KATHRYN MADDEN **PHOTOGRAPHED BY** PHILLIP CASTLETON

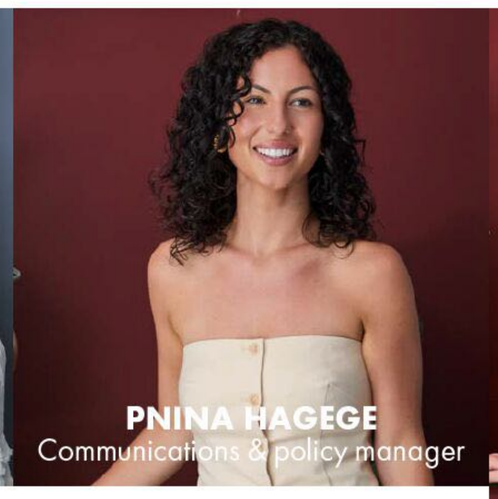
It's hard to remember a time when 'consent' wasn't part of our everyday parlance. But it wasn't until February 2021, when Chanel Contos posted an Instagram poll about the prevalence of sexual assault in Sydney schools, that it became the word on everyone's lips. "One of our board members said we basically ran the PR campaign for consent," says Contos, 28. "And I think that's a good way to look at it."

ELLE has interrupted Contos and her five team members on a getaway to Newcastle on the north coast of New South Wales. They're here to relax and celebrate, but also to brainstorm and plan for the next stage of Teach Us Consent, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to eradicating sexual violence. And there's plenty to celebrate. Their work in the past five years has been marked by milestone successes: they've helped mandate consent education in the national curriculum, created educational resources commissioned by the Australian Government and Tinder, and had their smart, pithy messaging plastered across music festivals and condom packets. Right now, they're campaigning for algorithmic regulation; next up, they plan to tackle digital porn literacy. And they do it all while being proudly youth-led and fostering a culture of empathy and respect – and sometimes hustling in their pyjamas.

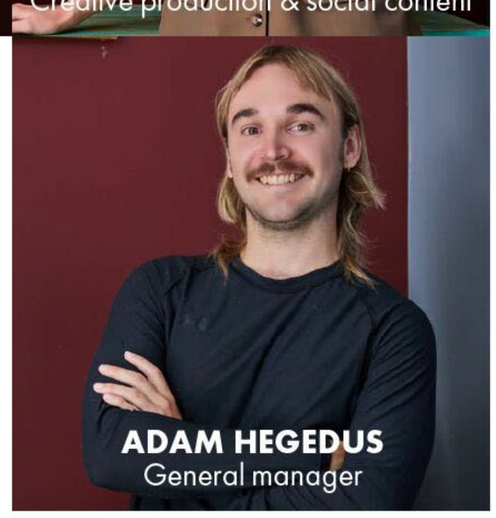
In five years, Chanel Contos has transformed consent education in Australia.











"WE'RE ASKING FOR SUCH BIG THINGS FROM DECISION MAKERS. BECAUSE WE'RE YOUNG, WE ALMOST HAVE MORE GUTS TO DO IT"

– PNINA HAGEGE

***ELLE*:** We're here to celebrate five years of Teach Us Consent, but did I just hear this is the first time your team has all been in the same room?

CHANEL CONTOS: It is. We work remotely and sometimes we'll have two or three of us together, but we've never had all six of us.

TESS FULLER: It's funny as we're here on an overnight strategy retreat to spend time together, but the agenda was quickly thrown out the window as we're launching a new campaign.

CC: I had a moment this morning when we were all in someone's bedroom, sitting and working in bed, hustling for this hardcore campaign launch. I sent a photo to Matt [Hübner], a Teach Us Consent board member, and he was like, "Oh, this is your dream culture — working from bed!"

***ELLE*:** Working from bed gets a bad rap, but it can be surprisingly productive …

CC: Yeah, we have very chill internal policies, but it doesn't mean the work's not professional. We don't need to be wearing a tie at 9am if we're doing good work.

***ELLE*:** That good work started in 2021, when Chanel posted a personal Instagram poll asking her followers if they'd ever been sexually assaulted by someone who went to a single-sex school in Sydney. This origin story is now well-told, but do the rest of you have memories of that moment?

PNINA HAGEGE: I grew up around the corner from Chanel and that day, it was like she broke Sydney. It was a real reckoning because she said the quiet thing out loud. Everyone knew [sexual violence] was happening, but she had the guts to bring it to everyone's attention and call for accountability.

TF: When the campaign was taking off, I joined a Facebook group for volunteers. At the same time, I was trying to get Chanel to answer questions for my first-year journalism assignment at uni; I was writing about the women's March 4 Justice in March 2021. Did you ever answer those?

CC: Did I answer your questions? I usually do, but I don't remember …

TF: Girl, you were busy! It's fine.

CC: But Tess ended up being our first paid employee. We paid her before we paid …

TF: Before Chanel! I had a part-time volunteer role for several years before we got substantive funding and then I was given a full-time role. I remember thinking, *I want to do this work my entire life!* It was really empowering as a then-22-year-old to be the tiniest cog in this machine powered by early-twenties women, and by the voices of girls. I was really overwhelmed by the magnitude, emotion and possibility in that.

CC: Adam was here from the start as well.

ADAM HEGEDUS: It felt like everything we were doing went viral. Early on we did a crowd-funding campaign to spur on the movement, and it raised $100,000.

CC: I think it helped that I was so ignorant; I didn't really understand what was going on. The media coverage was insane, and I had crazy access to politicians and ministers. After doing this work for five years, I've realised they don't normally respond to you on the same day. At one point I was in a meeting room with three ministers and two commissioners, and I didn't realise how [big] that was. I wasn't scared of anything.

***ELLE*:** Is that one of your virtues as a youth-led organisation? That you're fearless?

PH: We're really ambitious, as we're asking for such big things from decision makers. Because we're young, we almost have more guts to do it.

SOFIA STAVROU: And we're more likely to pivot with the times.

CC: But there's been a lot to learn along the way. I started this all on my personal Instagram account, which was silly. I wasn't thinking forward. Then I made [the petition] into a Google Doc, which kept crashing because there were





20,000 people on it [*laughs*]. I'll always remember February 20, 2021, because it was Matt [Hübner's] birthday and we sat up together all night. We were copying and pasting testimonies and checking them for defamation. It was so chaotic. I had a moment when I realised I'd accidentally posted the name of a rugby player who'd sexually assaulted someone on the Google Doc. So that was really stupid, but the whole process was stupid [*laughs*]. And then we got so many defamation cases against us. Oh actually, it wasn't us … it was just me! So again, ignorance was bliss at this stage.

***ELLE*:** But your progress from there was prolific, helping to mandate national consent education and to criminalise stealthing in certain jurisdictions. You have referenced a quote by political commentator Michael Brooks: "Be kind to people, be ruthless with systems." How does that inform your work?

PH: It's everything. It's an acknowledgement that putting shame on individual people for the systems they're not responsible for doesn't get us anywhere.

ANNABELLE KABLEAN: It keeps empathy at the forefront.

CC: It's embedded in our ethos and success. [What we do] is palatable because we don't single anyone out, but we call for communal accountability.

***ELLE*:** It's also the kind of thinking that, if employed universally, would make the world a better place. Speaking of which, Teach Us Consent is currently going global?

CC: Yeah, there's a lot of interest in our work in the UK and the US, and we're about to hire our first full-time employee in America.

PH: We got a message last night saying that Teach Us Consent is being used as a case study for changes to consent laws in Hong Kong. And our Promoting Consent Initiative resources were shared everywhere from Malaysia to France, the US, Germany and Brazil.

CC: I heard from someone at Match Group, which owns all the dating apps, that a Brazilian judge saw our Tinder consent course in Australia and was like, *Brazil needs to do this*. And someone sent us photos of our consent posters at a festival in France.

***ELLE*:** How do you consult and stay in touch with young, or younger, people?

SS: We have a Youth Advisory Group of 15 diverse young people from around Australia. We'll meet up online for about two hours and find out what matters to them about consent and sex education, and they'll give us feedback on our content and campaigns.

***ELLE*:** Does their feedback ever humble you?

PH: I remember them saying something we did was lame. They said, "Oh, that sounds like a millennial word."

TF: It was the word 'keen'!

***ELLE*:** You've no doubt consulted them for your latest campaign, Fix Our Feeds, a petition to the federal government to introduce a world-first opt-in feature to social media algorithms. What inspired this move away from traditional consent education and legislation?

CC: One thing I'll say is that I'm not scared for Teach Us Consent to not exist. I'd love to live in a world where we could all go and do something else. But as Sofia mentioned earlier, we're not afraid to pivot. We're trying to prevent normalised sexual violence. If the solution is consent education, we'll try that. If the solution is algorithm regulation, we'll try that. When I started Teach Us Consent five years ago, consent education was the most impactful policy change. And today, I think that algorithmic regulation is the most impactful thing we can contribute.

TF: We spoke to young people prior to launching the campaign and they were

"I'D LOVE TO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE WE COULD ALL GO AND DO SOMETHING ELSE"

– CHANEL CONTOS





Together in the same room for the first time ever, the Teach Us Consent team are marking five years of groundbreaking work. "There'll be some big reflections, and there are a few celebratory things in the works," Contos says.

having problems with their brothers, dads or boyfriends being 'red-pilled' by the algorithm. And lots of girls and women, including myself, are getting served content about traditional feminine roles and how to be a high-value woman, which involves lots of manipulation and deference. I'd love to get rid of that. Everyone has a story about their algorithm.

***ELLE*:** In a way, is the campaign a plea to go back to simpler times, when Instagram was just bad pictures of your friends' shoes and latte art?

TF: Yeah. We used Nashville filters in 2012 and we want that life back!

***ELLE*:** Adam, how would you describe your experience as a man in this space?

AH: I believe feminism is for everyone, and consent is not just one side's issue. Working here, I learn so much every day. My friends often see our videos and start asking questions; it's creating these new conversations for men.

TF: I think it's still scary for men to speak out [on topics like consent]. A highlight for me has been conversations with leading AFL players, male TikTokkers and comedians. After a bit of discussion and upskilling, they were confident to put their hand up and [speak to other men about consent]. Often the messaging around consent and feminism gets fed to men from women and, tonally, that might not land perfectly. We've had young boys say, "Oh, it's actually sick to hear a man talking about this."

AK: We had one boy who DMed us and said that throughout his life he'd had really negative relationships with women. But thanks to our resources, he'd done a full 180.

TF: I also had one man who worked in an organisation we were partnering with, and he called me a couple of weeks later and said, "I've spent a lot of time on your Instagram and I'm just realising how shit of a guy I've been." He became an internal male advocate in his [workplace] for consent.

***ELLE*:** In your work, you must hear and hold stories of victim-survivors' trauma. Is that emotionally taxing?

PH: We did a consultation for the NSW pornography harms inquiry. I was in that room, and hearing how people as young as nine or 10 have been affected by porn was one of the hardest things.

AK: But we talk to each other because it's a close and open team. You can always debrief with someone.

CC: I think my tolerance for hearing really fucked-up shit has gotten high. I used to be someone who would physically respond to someone's feelings of sadness. But [in this work] you have to learn to undo that, which is a really weird hypocrisy in that we do this work because we care.

***ELLE*:** Do you feel your work requires bravery?

CC: When I started Teach Us Consent, it was all in my DMs. Even though the [testimonials] were anonymous, I knew who the victim-survivors were because they were the ones DMing me. And the first thousand or so were from people I knew, or from people vaguely in my network. That meant it was often easy to identify the perpetrator. I know so many bad things about so many people. But they were also things that happened years ago … And I think it's brave to recognise the nuance.

TF: It's a brave thing to hold both the good and bad duplicity of humans.

CC: That's what I'm trying to get at. It's brave to be able to hold empathy for perpetrators within the work we do.

***ELLE*:** What's the most rewarding part of your work?

TF: I feel really fulfilled that I now have the language, patience and empathy to bring individuals into the fold. I want everyone to work for a consent organisation for a year to have this superpower.

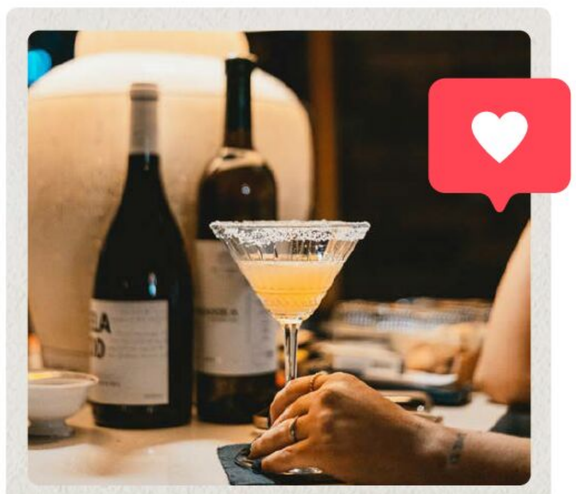
SS: The work we do is inclusive, intentional and genuine, which is rare.

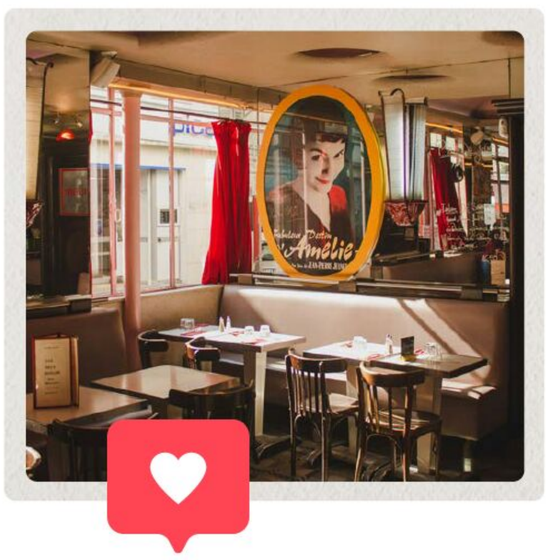
TF: We love hearing about the activism that goes on within schools. There are girls who are writing persuasive pieces in Year 9. And young boys who are like, "I think we should get a healthy masculinity program in our school, because we've got a real problem here."

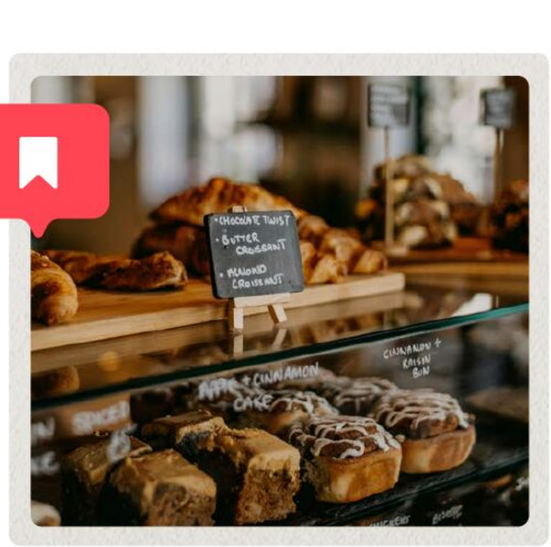
AH: For me, it's fulfilling that we've changed things. In 10 or 20 years, we'll be able to point to the work we did. Kids will assume that it's part of society, but we'll be able to say, "No, actually there was a fight to get there, and we were a part of that."

Acquired taste

ALL ANYONE WANTS RIGHT NOW IS A CURATION OF WHAT TO EAT, WEAR AND WATCH FROM PEOPLE IN THE KNOW. NAOMI MAY CHARTS THE RISE OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND LOOKS INTO WHAT'S DRIVING IT BECAUSE ... IYKYK

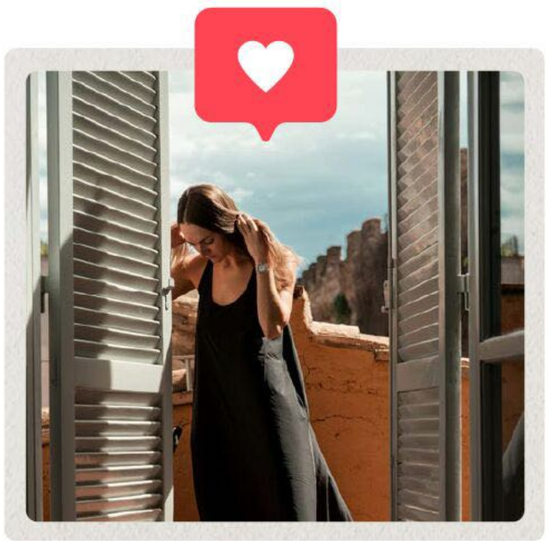


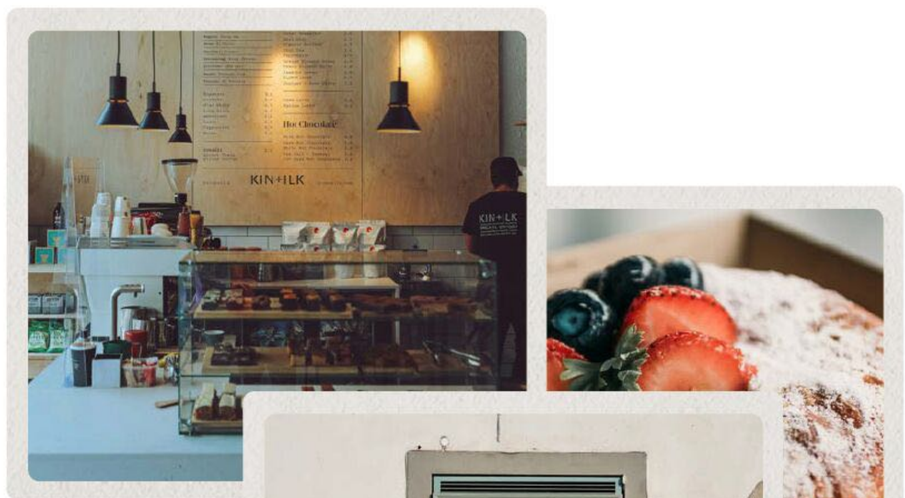




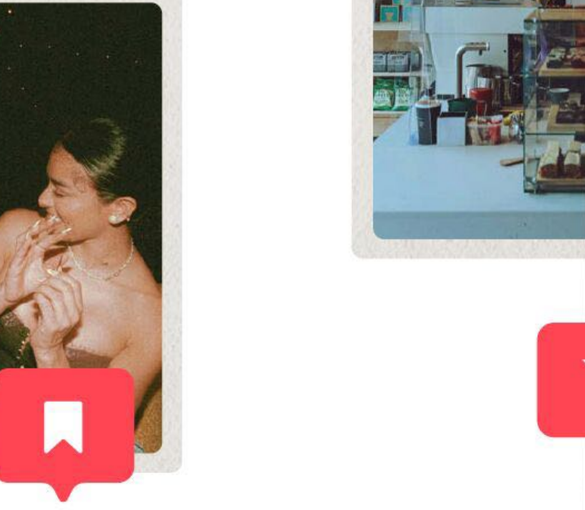
My partner had planned it: a Friday date night at the neighbourhood Italian located on the corner of our road. The restaurant in question is one of those unassuming places with cafe curtains and flickering candles in the middle of wonky wooden tables. It's small and neatly tucked away from the main street — the kind of place you have to know about rather than something you simply stumble upon. On the date night in question, it turned out that this tiny Italian had been sought by huge swathes of very cool young people, who had unearthed it by way of a popular Substack.

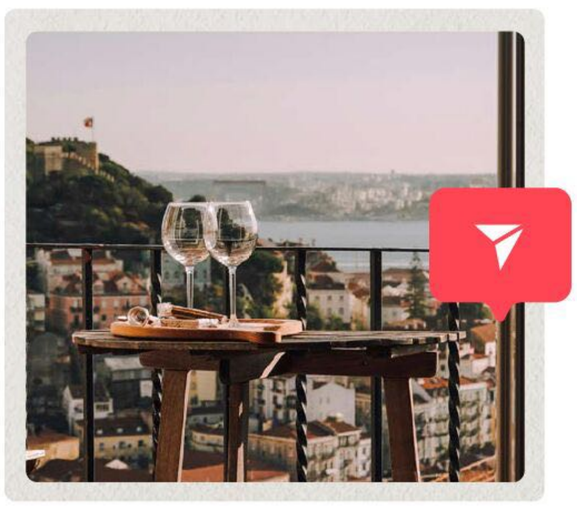
The exact same thing happened a few months prior during a visit to New York, when an all-American

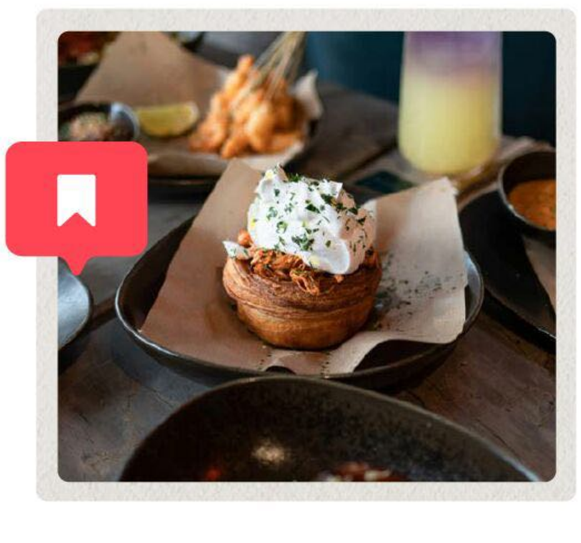












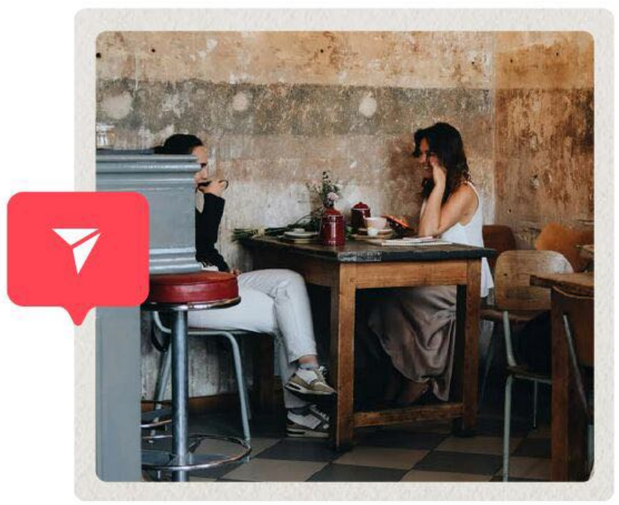
diner called Bernie's in Williamsburg proved impossible to get a reservation at, as queues of hungry customers snaked around the block. For months, members of the TikTok cognoscenti had been declaring it 'the coolest restaurant in Brooklyn'. The ripples of recommendation culture were found lapping at Asian shores months before that, too, when I was unable to get a spur-of-the-moment table at a restaurant in Seoul that people had implored me to visit. I'd been told it was a locals' favourite, with a whiff of IYKYK intrigue. It turns out that, in the age of digital media, there's no longer such a thing as a locals' favourite. Make no mistake: we are in the grips of a recommendation frenzy, where we live our lives according to tip-offs by influencers-turned-curators whose taste we hinge our social and cultural lives upon.

This new wave of people has moved beyond traditional influencing and is driving the taste economy in a different way. Unlike influencers, who merely showcase products or experiences, these curators act as cultural gatekeepers, filtering the overwhelming abundance of choices into carefully considered recommendations. Our hunger for this human curation serves as an antidote to AI-generated content; in an era when algorithms can instantly produce recommendations, people are seeking the human touch. We crave endorsements we can trust, ones that carry the promise of being unique and personally vetted, rather than machine-generated suggestions based on data points and engagement metrics.

While we know so much more about what everyone is doing, eating and wearing all of the time, there's a pressure to optimise our own lives — to make sure we're spending the (often limited) time we have only going to the best restaurants, wearing the comfiest tried-and-tested ballet flats and reading recommended books that stretch our intellect. To beat consumption fatigue and cut through the deluge of information, a strong,

curated list from a trusted, invite-only source holds more weight and value than ever before. That's precisely where the plethora of 'insider' newsletters and social-media accounts come into play, driving the golden age of recommendations.

People want to know what to want, think, feel and buy so much that they're now willing to join waiting lists to be admitted to certain



in-the-know communities. Among those leading the tasteful charge is *Spittle*, the London art scene's answer to Lady Whistledown's gossip rag. Known as the city's most anarchic art newsletter, it's run by a collective, whose anonymity allows them the freedom to say what they want. To gauge the hype around these insider missives, you don't have to look further than *Opulent Tips*, 'the internet's first shopping newsletter', founded and written by fashion critic Rachel Tashjian. It has more than 10,000 subscribers, with the list of people waiting to be accepted growing longer by the day.

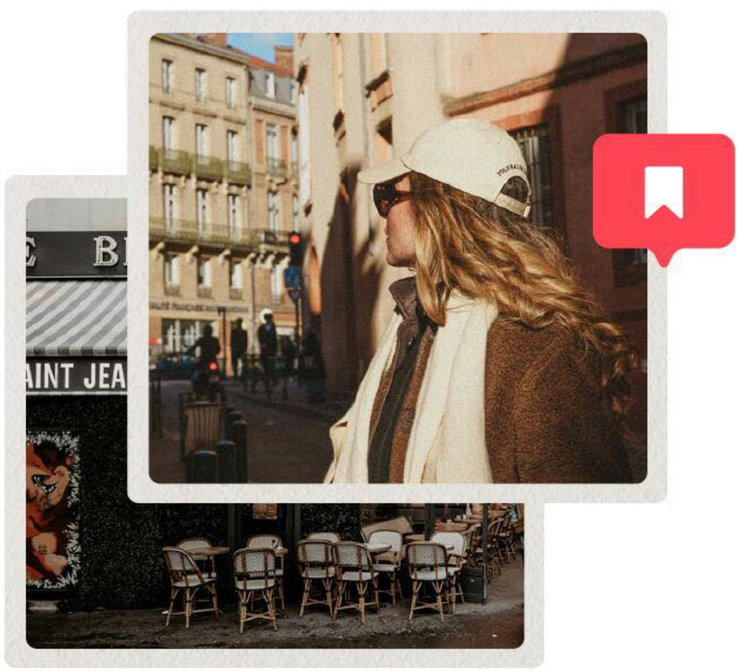
"A couple of years ago, people became really obsessed with blaming everything on the algorithm — you know, the idea that we're seeing what we're seeing in movies and TV and fashion and books because the algorithm wants us to see it," Tashjian says. "As a result of that, I think people became very obsessed with this idea of having taste, almost in direct opposition to the algorithm, which can't have taste."

And there lies the crux: while anybody can recommend, not everybody has taste. This is precisely the sentiment that inspired Alexia Tamer to found AmiGo, a curated, invite-only app for niche and local travel recommendations that counts interiors influencer Lucy Williams, content creator Chrissy Rutherford and designer Maryam Nassir Zadeh as contributors. "It's become easier for everybody to share, so now that everyone's doing it and there's so much information, there's more clutter, and that's created a desire for unique, tailored and personal recommendations," Tamer explains. The premise of AmiGo is to lend



recommending an air of intimacy and specialism from tastemakers you can trust — Williams posts about Mèlisses, an idyllic boutique hotel in Andros, Greece, while Nassir Zadeh shares La Lagunilla, a Sunday-only bazaar in Mexico City.

Two brands that have become emblematic of this online recommendation cottage industry — and prove that content containing recommendations is what people want — are *Perfectly Imperfect*, a counter-cultural newsletter founded in 2020, and Dream Baby Press, an online literature community whose irreverent love/hate lists that it shares with its 42,000 Instagram followers have become a mainstay of its brand. While the people (including PinkPantheress and Sam Fragoso) who the brands feature alongside their personal recommendations are known among certain circles, they are not A-listers — and this is what makes them so powerful. The taste economy today has come to be fuelled by people on the periphery, but whose judgement and aesthetics resonate with ours and whose recommendations we probably haven't heard of.



But sharing recommendations online presents a dichotomy: if divulging to the masses increases the popularity of said recommendation, taking it from counter-cultural currency to the mainstream, then are we inevitably due to return to a pre-2010s era of gatekeeping? In a viral March 2024 interview with *The Cut*, Laura Harrier noted: "Controversial opinion, but I feel like we need to go back to gatekeeping. Everyone is

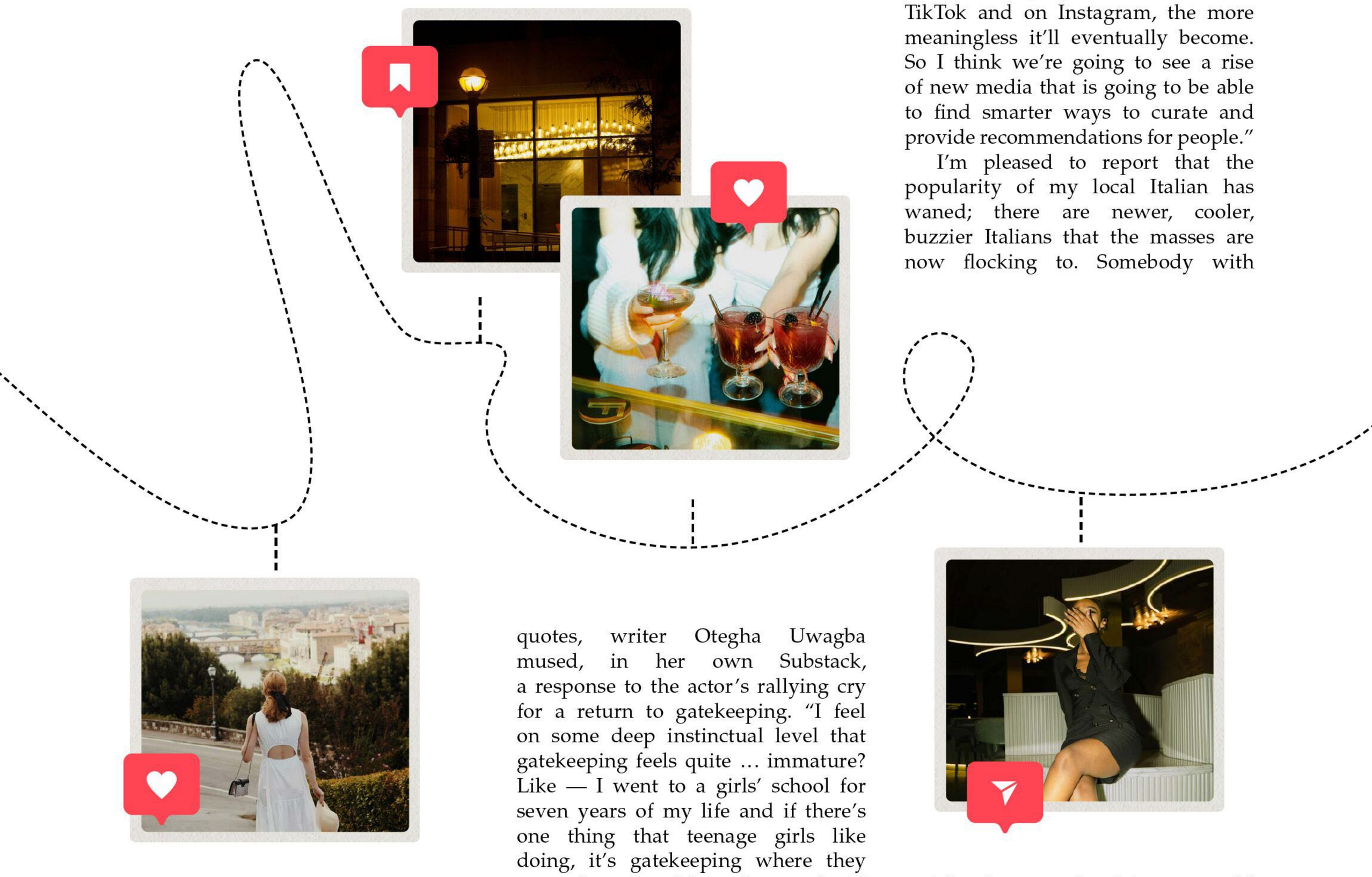
sharing way too much information. We've all worked hard to find places and a distinct style, and I don't think it should be given out on the internet all the time."

Harrier has a point and, given that some recommendations have led to places being completely overrun with people, authorities are now taking steps to counterbalance the phenomenon. In May 2025, the tourist authority in Spain's Balearic Islands announced that it will stop using social-media influencers to promote popular destinations, noting that 'selfie tourism' was damaging some of its most treasured locations. "I'm no longer excited about finding things anymore when a Substacker gets too big, because I know that this is now the new mainstream," says Jenny Gyllander, founder of Thingtesting, a website that allows users to rate, review and recommend brands. "It's funny because it's as though we're trying to be the only one in our friend group who follows certain things or knows about certain things," Gyllander adds. "I don't think that the kind of influencer that just does paid sponsorships is the future of the creator economy."

Not everybody is pro-gatekeeping. In response to Harrier's proliferated quotes, writer Otegha Uwagba mused, in her own Substack, a response to the actor's rallying cry for a return to gatekeeping. "I feel on some deep instinctual level that gatekeeping feels quite … immature? Like — I went to a girls' school for seven years of my life and if there's one thing that teenage girls like doing, it's gatekeeping where they got that bag/shoes/jeans from! (The answer was always Urban Outfitters)," Uwagba wrote, adding: "There's a desire these days to skip the steps that go into cultivating taste (or opinions — a topic for another day), with people seemingly failing to realise that organic discovery, the process of actually *acquiring* those tastes, is actually part of what makes experiencing them satisfying."

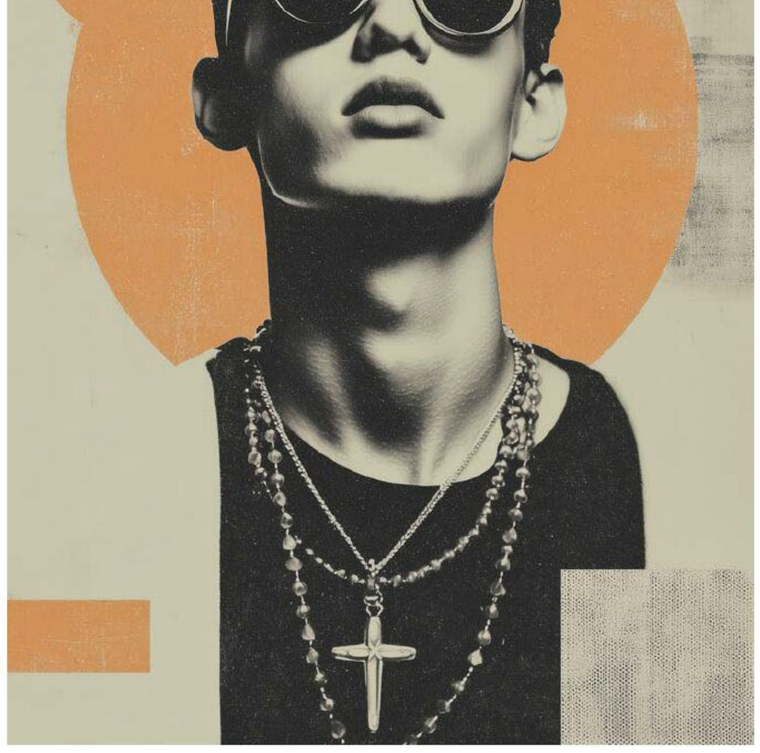
Casey Lewis is a former *New York Magazine* editor and author of the *After School* Substack, which has more than 80,000 subscribers. She suggests that, in part, the saturation of social media created cache around knowing things that other people didn't. Yet there is a finite number of restaurants, destinations and brands in the world, so is it inevitable that recommendations will eventually come to cannibalise themselves? Everything is cyclical, Tamer notes. "The more people recommend on TikTok and on Instagram, the more meaningless it'll eventually become. So I think we're going to see a rise of new media that is going to be able to find smarter ways to curate and provide recommendations for people."

I'm pleased to report that the popularity of my local Italian has waned; there are newer, cooler, buzzier Italians that the masses are now flocking to. Somebody with a following — who I knew would post their every move — visited my city recently and asked me for an Italian recommendation. Despite the abundant oversharing mindset I have always had, I found myself pausing and, shamelessly, recommending an overexposed Italian in the next suburb. Yes, I have erected a gate to keep the things I love from being ruined. And no, I'm not ashamed to admit it.



UNSPLASH



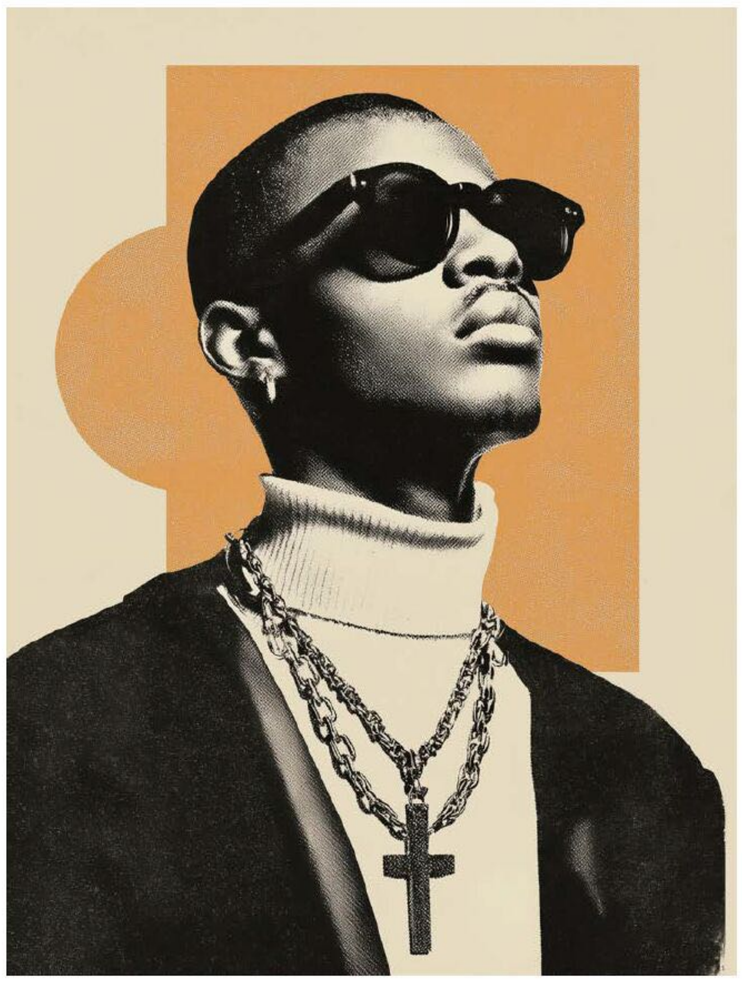






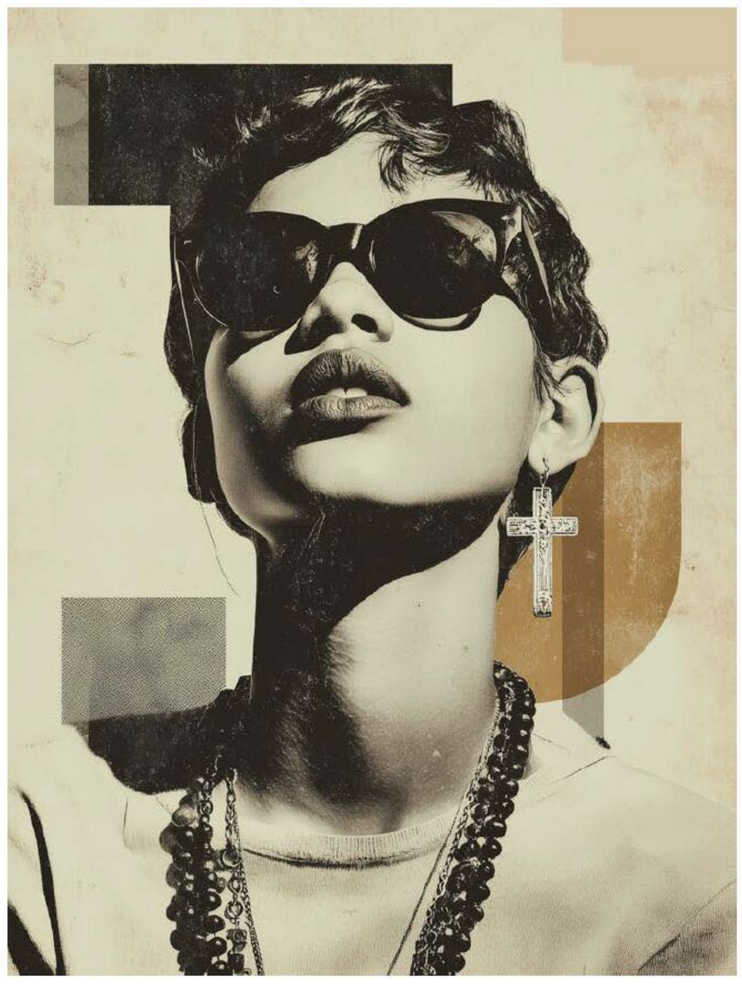


LIKE A PRAYER



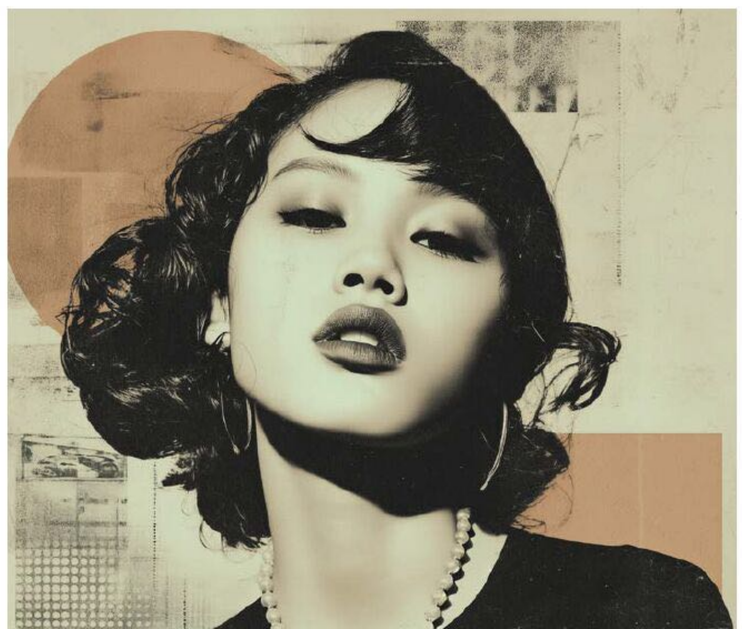
CHRISTIANITY IS BEING RESURRECTED – OR IS IT? WE GO INSIDE GEN Z'S SEARCH FOR MEANING AND DISCOVER IT'S A LOT MORE NUANCED THAN OUR ALGORITHMS WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE

WORDS BY VICTORIA PEARSON









On an ordinary afternoon driving home from who knows where, a decal of text on the back of a forest-green who-knows-what-model car caught my attention. "JUST A GIRL WHO LOVES JESUS," it read in a bubble-style white font. Another detail diverted my eye: a green capital P floating in the centre of a white plastic square, shoehorned into the corner of the number plate. Based on the average licensing timeline in most Australian states, that likely puts the driver somewhere between 18 and 21 years old.

The moment wouldn't have lingered had it not arrived in the midst of a deluge of content my social media algorithm had decided belonged to me. Some featured tarot spreads and manifestation audios; most were Reels of gen Z boys in activewear quoting Bible scripture near, or while using, gym equipment. "How to glorify God in your workouts" user @jvckryan offers in one (the first step was to "start with surrender"). Another, @fitdisciple_, quotes Hebrews 12:11: "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

As someone who was raised Catholic, attended Catholic schools and received all the requisite sacraments in all the requisite settings — except my Confirmation, which was hosted en masse at Wollongong's WIN Entertainment Centre — God was depicted as omnipresent and omniscient, though never 'cool', and rarely mentioned in the same breath as 'gains'. My childhood subscription to Catholicism was inherited, and I don't identify as religious now (though after a few drinks, a rendition of the admittedly catchy "Here I Am, Lord" has been known to spring forth like a bout of gastro). But the way belief shapeshifts across generations has always fascinated me. Hillsong's mid-2000s fever pitch was a particular Roman Empire of mine, as is the way God seems to be trending up now in younger demographics — particularly among boys and men.

In the UK, a recent report by the Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life found a substantial number of under-35s were turning to religion as a tool for "personal transformation or healing". *The Guardian* also reported a surge in sales of the Bible in the region in 2025, increasing by 134 per cent since 2019 — attributed to "younger people seeking some sort of spirituality". A feature published last year by the independent Australia-based think tank the Lowy Institute offered that in the US and at home, the gen Z religious landscape is "sharply gendered". The author, Dr Intifar Chowdhury, wrote that "Young men now identify as Christian at higher rates than women, often amid feelings of cultural dislocation and a belief that modern life offers them less than it did their fathers".

"In church I feel like who I'm supposed to be," says Oliver*, an 18-year-old man from Sydney who self-identifies as Christian. Oliver started attending his church two years ago, and has a "strong" group of friends within the community. "There's no pressure," he says of his attendance. Rather, "it gives me direction."

> "YOUNG MEN NOW IDENTIFY AS CHRISTIAN AT HIGHER RATES THAN WOMEN, OFTEN AMID … A BELIEF THAT MODERN LIFE OFFERS THEM LESS THAN IT DID THEIR FATHERS"
>
> **– DR INTIFAR CHOWDHURY**

It's tempting to call all this a revival — indeed, that's the assumption I bulldozed into this article with. It's also easy to forget that anything can look like a movement if TikTok decides to show it to you 20 consecutive times. Professor Anna Halafoff, a sociologist of religion at Deakin University and coordinator of the Spirituality and Wellbeing (SWell) Research Network, has spent years studying how young Australians think about belief and identity. Her body of work — including census analysis, nationally representative surveys and in-depth qualitative research — paints a far more nuanced picture than my digital diet. As Halafoff puts it, "The short answer, which then has a much longer explanation, is that it's complex." Yes, some young men are gravitating towards conservative



"YOU DO YOGA AT SCHOOL, MEDITATION, ASTROLOGY … THEY'RE JUST PART OF EVERYONE'S EVERYDAY LEXICON AND LIFE"

– PROFESSOR ANNA HALAFOFF

Christian expressions, and some are highly visible online. "It's just that the reporting on this trend seems to sort of simplify it or overblow it a little bit."

Part of that exaggeration, she explains, comes from studies that either rely on too few young participants or extrapolate from data sets that barely capture them at all. Meanwhile, the 2021 Australian Census shows Christianity continuing its long decline among younger generations while 'no religion' continues to rise. Until the next census, scheduled for this year, there's no statistical evidence of gen Z flocking back to churches in droves — no matter what our For You pages suggest.

Halafoff's most crucial correction, though, is that the conversation has centred almost exclusively on men and ignored the equal and opposite story unfolding among women. "When some of these studies see the numbers that there are suddenly more young gen Z men declaring themselves to be Christian than women, the other side of that story is: *Hang on, is it young men turning to religion, or is it young women turning away from religion?*" Many young women, she notes, have left institutional Christianity in response to sexual-abuse scandals, gender inequality and anti-LGBTQI+ teachings. But they're not abandoning meaning altogether, some are simply migrating. Spirituality — or at least certain forms of it — has become a safer, more expansive container for this generation's needs.

Which brings us to one of the most interesting findings in Halafoff's research: the volume of gen Z who identify as spiritual. As it stands, the Australian Census does not offer a 'Spiritual' option alongside other religions, but in a robust study conducted by Halafoff and fellow researchers, titled Australia's Generation Z (AGZ) Study, a "really significant percentage" — 38 per cent, to be exact — identified as spiritual. Even for the researchers, this finding was unexpected. On what constitutes spirituality, Halafoff defines it as a "relational connection to something larger than oneself that also informs your ethics and how you act in the world".

Samara*, a 17-year-old student from Melbourne, describes herself as "not religious, but definitely spiritual". She says, "My parents are Catholic. And I just feel like there's something bigger than me, or bigger than humans, around us. But I don't follow any specific religion." She estimates "a lot" of her friends think similarly.

This didn't come from nowhere. Halafoff traces a lineage — spiritualist societies in the early 1900s, the counterculture of the '60s and '70s, the New Age boom of the '90s — to show how millennials and gen Z inherited a world where yoga, meditation, astrology and mindfulness were already woven into the cultural tapestry. "It's just everyday language now that you know about yoga. You

do yoga at school, you do meditation at school, astrology … they're just part of everyone's everyday lexicon and life." As she explains, "It's not so much that this younger generation has to go out somewhere else to find themselves. They've grown up with it. You're already immersed in it." And the fact that their engagement can be playful — tarot nights, astrology memes, manifestation rituals — doesn't undermine its impact. "If it is fun, that doesn't make it any less serious … it's still important to their reality."

One of the strongest motifs in their worldview is a deepening connection to nature. "About three quarters of young Australians [in our study] report having a strong connection with nature," Halafoff says. She attributes this to several overlapping pressures: the burnout and hyper-velocity of urban life, the existential weight of the climate crisis, the fact that humans are nature ("humans being separate from nature is some kind of weird binary that people created") and a growing desire to learn from First Nations knowledge.

None of this means that the conservative Christian trend is imaginary. It's simply one current in a much larger, more intricate stream. In the AGZ study, a notable group of young people (17 per cent) still identified as 'religiously committed'. And though this is not the dominant gen Z story, Halafoff emphasises how deeply this generation values diversity and rights protections. "Young people will respect the religions of others as long as they don't impose their beliefs on other people and as long as they don't trample over the rights of other people."

Which is perhaps why the picture of gen Z as nihilistic or apathetic falls apart the moment you look closely. Many young people who identify as religious or spiritual report more hope for the future — not less. "Why do people get drawn to religion or spirituality in the first place?" Halafoff asks. "It's always to understand more about the state of the world, the state of oneself, how to cope with suffering, how to be a good person and how to try and make a positive difference."

That hasn't changed. What has changed is the backdrop: a multi-crisis era, an online town hall and a spiritual inheritance that spans church pews, yoga studios, climate marches and WitchTok. Gen Z is simply deciding which parts of the sacred are worth keeping for themselves.

"[I'M] NOT RELIGIOUS, BUT DEFINITELY SPIRITUAL … I JUST FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING BIGGER THAN ME AROUND US"

– SAMARA*



ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI. *NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED

get Creative



ALISON *Wonderland*

Alison Wonderland is one of electronic's most influential and innovative artists – and experimentation has always been at the heart of her practice. "I was a classically trained musician, so I know all about music theory, but learning a DAW [digital audio workstation] took me a long time to be fluent in," she says. "Back then, no-one was expecting anything from me, so I would sit down every day in front of the computer and experiment a lot … Some of the craziest music I've ever made was created when I wasn't thinking about the rules." As a woman in music, she strongly believes that "the studio is supposed to be about mutual respect and leaving your ego at the door. If someone can't do that, I'm not interested. I have been doubted a lot, especially at the start of my career, but it just made me become better. Recently I've worked with more women in the studio and it's been so amazing."

LISTEN

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN ARE TAKING OVER ELECTRONIC MUSIC. ROXY LOLA SPEAKS TO THE ARTISTS DOMINATING THE SOUND WAVES

ANNA *Lunoe*

An internationally renowned producer, songwriter, DJ and Apple Music radio host, Anna Lunoe is a pioneer in dance music. Coming up as a host on FBi Radio, she honed her production skills with the help of friend Nina Las Vegas as well as at the Ableton Liveschool, which runs music-producing courses. "The best part of DJing is when I feel like I've created an experiential journey that I'm excited about presenting … The journey connects with people," she says. "The feeling is unmistakable and exists purely in that moment. It feels like a moving meditation and, for one or two hours, we are all locked in together." Through her podcast, *Create/Destroy*, she discusses pushing through creative blocks with some of the best artists on the scene. Her tip for up-and-comers? "Work fast, write fast and get things moving before you strive for perfection in sound design."



CAT & *Calmell*

Since switching up their sound to a more electronic-pop feel last year, best-friend duo Cat & Calmell have really hit their stride. The artists "have a lot of fun finding weird samples to throw into a song", manipulating their vocals and seeing how far they can push a track's "weirdness and chaos ... We didn't realise how much we loved electronic music until we got to perform it." Being young women in the music industry can be challenging, but a change in perspective has helped. "You're not obligated to be compliant to a double standard and unlearning that is hard, but working on your self-worth and trusting your gut has been our North star. We're constantly meeting other women who are so cool and encourage and inspire us." Their advice to fellow young producers is simple: "Just start and ask lots of questions."





NINA *Las Vegas*

Nina Las Vegas (aka Nina Agzarian) is one of the most powerful female forces on the scene. The DJ, producer and founder of NLV Records, a label led mostly by women, creates club music and champions younger artists. "Collaborating is the best way to learn ... Learn just enough to keep moving, then learn more later," the trailblazer says. Seeing both sides of the industry, her advice to young women is to "learn the boring stuff, including contracts, budgets, timelines. That knowledge is power. Ask questions early, take notes and don't apologise for wanting clarity. Also, community matters. Find your people ... Being an artist is hard, and nearly two decades in, I'm still here. I've got nothing to prove and I hope that confidence inspires others."



MALLRAT

Mallrat is the project of Grace Shaw, the groundbreaking artist who's mastered the art of sampling, accumulating more than half a billion Spotify streams in the past decade. She began her career DJing around Brisbane before teaching herself how to produce. "I love that I can intertwine production and songwriting," she says. "I often end up sampling myself to create new ideas." Mallrat keeps her circle filled with creative collaborators, including rising stars Ninajirachi, Lonelyspeck, 1tbsp and 2charm. "I'm surrounded by gifted collaborators who value curiosity and interesting ideas," she says. "I am the luckiest girl in the world to be best friends with my biggest inspirations."



RONA.

Kaytetye DJ and producer RONA. expertly infuses her music with her wisdom and connection to Country. "I often play what I'm writing directly out to Country, opening the doors and windows and playing the synths to the outside environment," she says. "I let the land hear the music as it's forming, then record the way Country responds through wind, birds and shifting energy. My favourite sample came from a spinifex pigeon that began calling back while I was playing." RONA.'s advice to those excited by crafting music is to "follow the excitement. Don't wait until you feel ready. Curiosity will teach you more than perfection ever will ... And trust your ear early. It already knows more than you think."

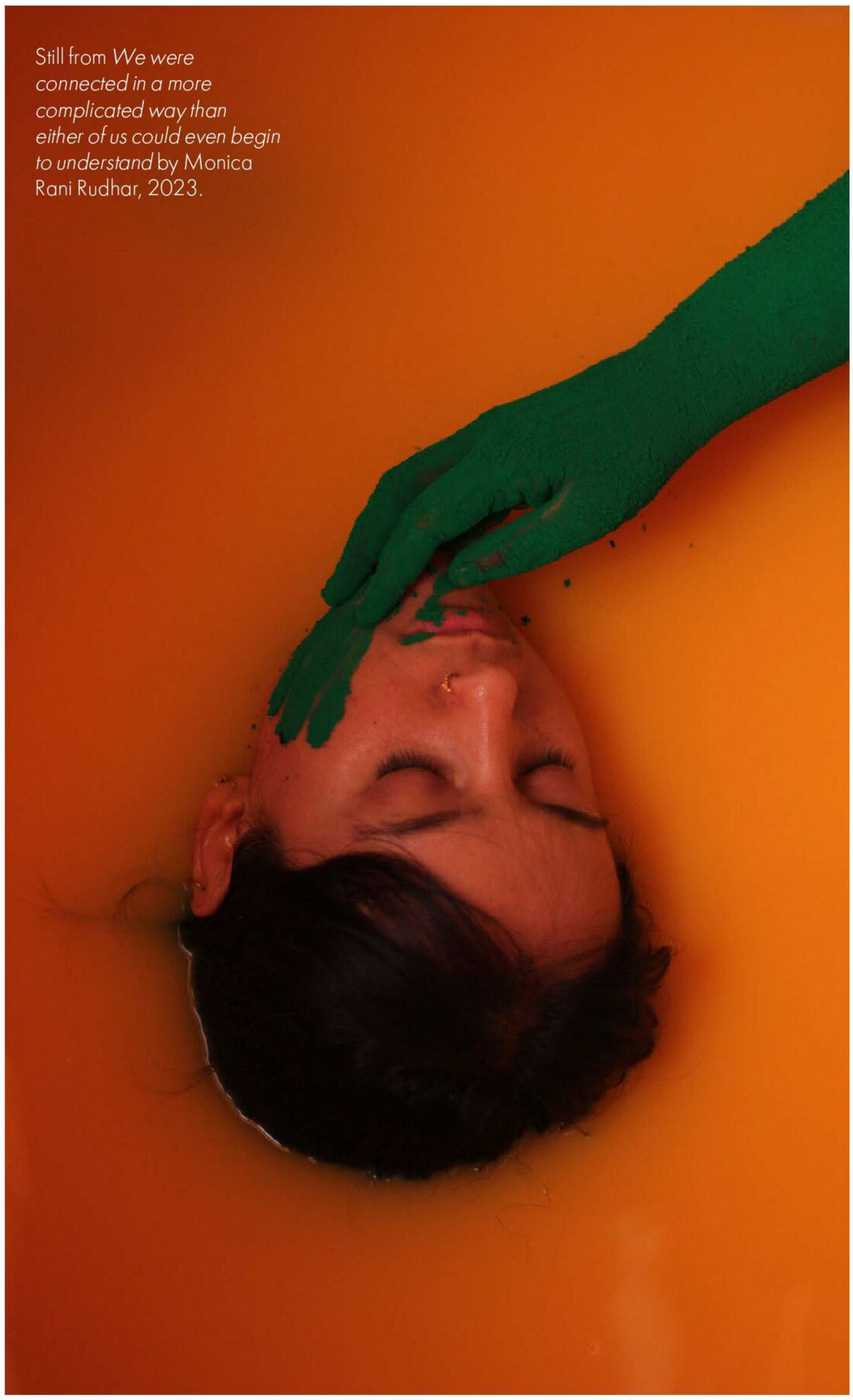
BARE CLIPS; KYLA BOSQ; BANANAS CLARKE; DONSLENS; SAMMY-JO LANG-WAITE; WILLIAM ZHANG

VISIT

GET TO KNOW SOME OF THE INSPIRING ARTISTS AT THIS YEAR'S BIENNALE OF SYDNEY

WORDS BY MICHELLE WANG

Rememory: the 25th Biennale of Sydney is on March 14–June 14.



Still from *We were connected in a more complicated way than either of us could even begin to understand* by Monica Rani Rudhar, 2023.

MONICA *Rani Rudhar*

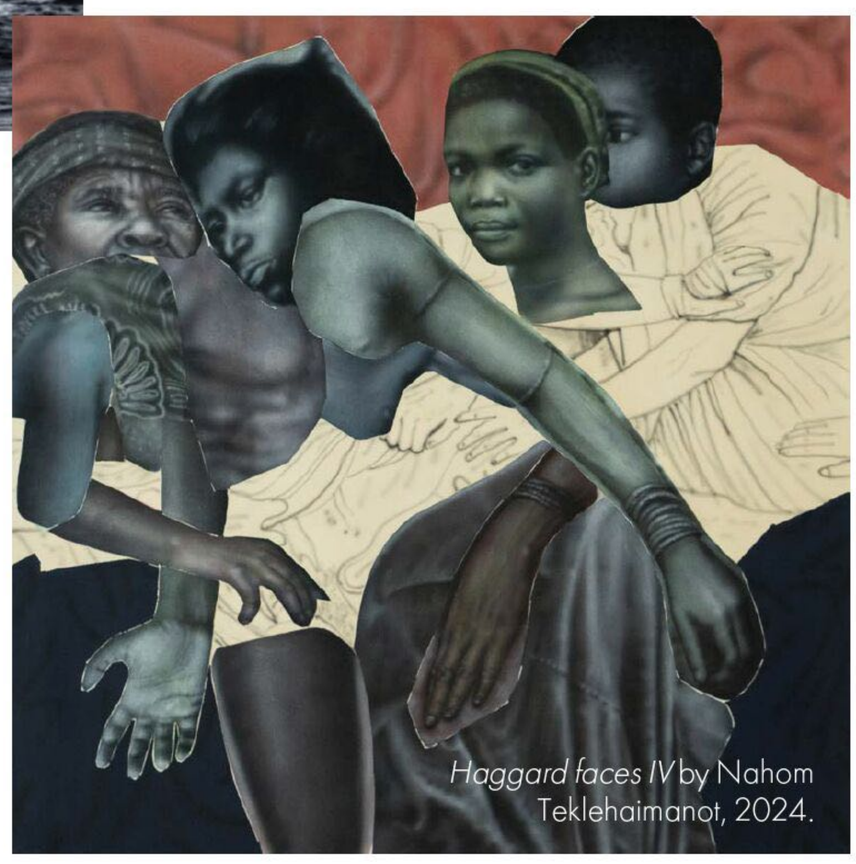
Sydney-based artist Monica Rani Rudhar continues to push her multidisciplinary practice across sculpture, video and performance with a new multi-channel video installation for the Biennale at Penrith Regional Gallery. "*The fire in me was lit long ago* draws on my own family history to explore how legacies of resistance, courage and endurance are passed down across generations," she says. "Through interwoven stories – ranging from my grandfather's role in India's anti-colonial struggle to intimate family symbols and memories – I transform personal and historical sites of oppression into acts of defiance and survival."



Cast in cast out by Dennis Golding, 2020.

DENNIS *Golding*

First Nations artist Dennis Golding presents a new work at the Biennale that draws on his childhood and reflects on the gentrification of "The Block" in Sydney's Redfern. "My work, *Connecting back*, re-creates the beaded maze toys from Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service that I played with as a child, reimagining the bricks from the demolished Aboriginal Flag mural into handmade beads," he says. "It's about displacement and what gets erased when Aboriginal families are pushed out, but it's also about those warm memories of community and care."



Haggard faces IV by Nahom Teklehaimanot, 2024.

NAHOM *Teklehaimanot*

Ethiopia-born Nahom Teklehaimanot uses collage and airbrush to create diverse compositions that evoke dreams, distance and longing. He presents three new large-scale canvases at the Art Gallery of NSW titled *This is my silence you name the sound*, which speak to his lived experience as a refugee. "These works are a meditation on silence, movement and memory," he says. "They trace a journey from a home that no longer remembers, through desert and sea, where the living and the dead travel together."



NIKESHA *Breeze*

Nikesha Breeze brings to life unflinching perspectives of African American enslavement in the southern states of the USA through bold, interdisciplinary artistic storytelling across painting, sculpture, installation, performance and film. At White Bay Power Station, Breeze presents *Living histories*, "an immersive multistorey installation anchored by a monumental baobab tree made from thousands of metres of cotton gauze". The work interweaves textile sculpture, live performance, recorded voices, original music and multichannel video to "activate an essential archive of testimonies from formerly enslaved people in the US, bridging past, present and future through sanctuary-like spaces".

Anonymous African American man and child; 1865 by Nikesha Breeze, 2020.



HOU *I-Ting*

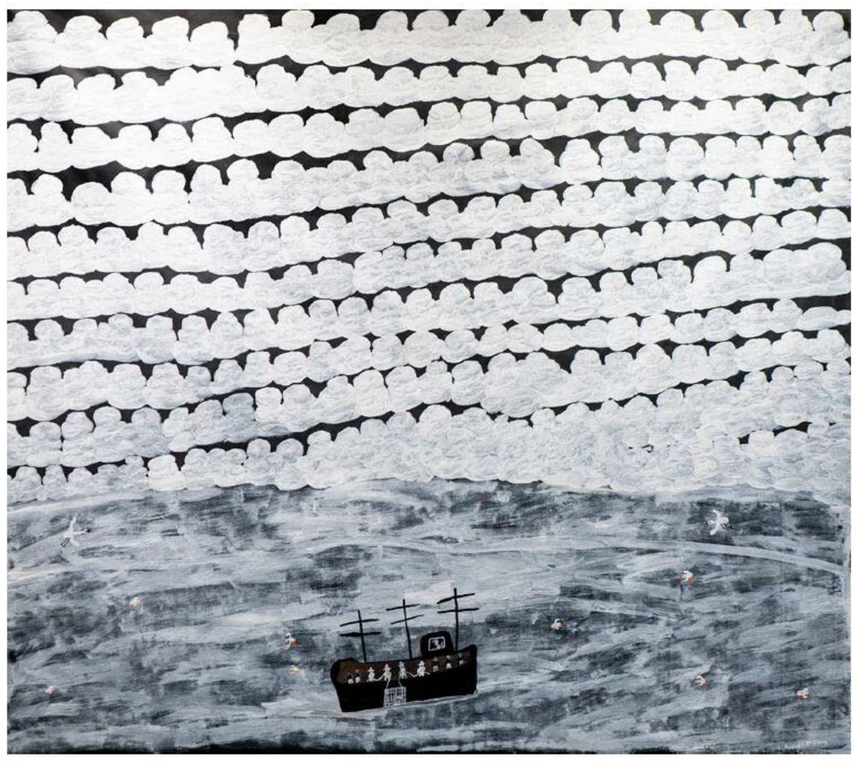
Hou I-Ting's inventive artistic practice blends imagery and video with embroidery. Her installation at the Biennale combines archival photographs of women's labour in girls' education during Taiwan's colonial period with site-specific archival black-and-white photographs from Australia's textile histories, "inviting audiences to physically traverse connections between self and others across past and present".

White Uniform, single channel video, by Hou I-Ting, 2017.

NANCY *Yukuwal McDinny*

Artist and activist Nancy Yukuwal McDinny was born on Fetrel Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Through her paintings, she addresses the brutal histories of colonialism in the Gulf region, including her family's experiences of European settlement and the environmental issues caused by mining. At White Bay Power Station, McDinny will produce her largest work to date: a site-specific mural that will stand as monument, memorial and mission statement.

Palm Island to Townsville by Nancy Yukuwal McDinny, 2024.



For more than 50 years, the Biennale of Sydney has provided a platform for new art and ideas

ANGĒLICA *Serech*

First Nations Guatemalan textile artist Angélica Serech is the inheritor of a strong family and community legacy of weaving. Commissioned by the Biennale's partnership with Fondation pour l'art contemporain, Serech will present a series of works at the Art Gallery of NSW that push the limits of textiles. Her works animate a dialogue between the personal and the collective in her vibrant and creative expression of indigenous culture, history and freedom.

1 *Alma* by Angélica Serech, 2022.

ROSE *B. Simpson*

Mixed-media artist Rose B. Simpson has also been commissioned under the Biennale's partnership with the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain. Her sophisticated artworks inherit the legacy of her tribe in Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico, known for its women-led ceramic artistry since the 6th century. Simpson notes that her video installation at the Biennale is accompanied by "the adornment I sewed to wear while filming, as well as a series of spoken meditation that viewers are invited to consider".

2 *Listen 1* by Rose B. Simpson, 2024.



1

2

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS; KATE RUSSELL; MARTIN RUSTANDI; BRAD TRONE; COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS; EYERUSALEM JIREGNA; MICHAEL MARZIK; KATE RUSSELL

READ

ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S LEADING ONLINE LITERARY VOICES SHARES HER READING LIST

WORDS BY ANGELA LAW



INSIDE CAMERON GIBSON'S SLAGGY BOOK CLUB



When Cameron Gibson posted a spontaneous Instagram Story about Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* on a random afternoon, she didn't expect it to define the trajectory of her professional life.

"I remember that book just blew my mind," she says. "It was like nothing I'd ever read before, and I just felt the need to say something about it. I didn't think that anyone who followed me on my personal Instagram would care, but I got so many responses — people were replying, wanting to talk about it."

At the time, Gibson was working a job that wasn't fulfilling her and had recently pivoted from studying fashion to writing. "I thought I wanted to work in fashion, but then I realised I just liked consuming fashion and didn't want to work in that industry," she explains. "So I started writing, and that sort of kicked off the books and writing and publishing pipeline."

But with one quick post, and the surprisingly enthusiastic response that ensued, she had stumbled upon an outlet for her literary passion that hasn't abated in the years since. Thus, Slaggy Book Club was born.

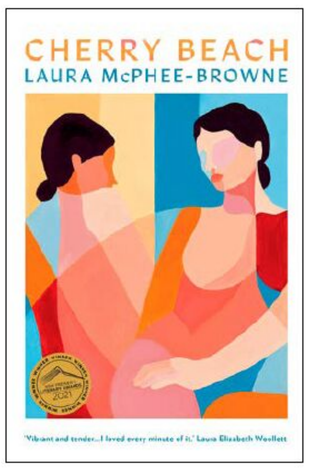
The name was inspired by the cult British rom-com *Angus, Thongs and Perfect Snogging*, a reference that might suggest romantic escapism to those who know the film. But despite the cheeky moniker, Gibson is far more likely to be found championing Australian literary fiction than the latest TikTok romance sensation. (Though, like most of us, she has certainly dipped her toe into Rachel Reid's *Heated Rivalry* universe.) "There's a misconception that I'm reading a whole lot of smut and romance," she says with a laugh. "But that's pretty much the opposite of what I'm reading."

Gibson explains that her goal with Slaggy Book Club — which has built a following of 96,000 people across Instagram, TikTok and YouTube — was to create an accessible and casual place to discuss literary fiction. "I really try to prioritise our publishing scene," she says. With favourites like Madelaine Lucas' *Thirst for Salt*, Laura McPhee-Browne's *Cherry Beach* and Madeleine Gray's *Chosen Family*, the focus is firmly on celebrating local talent, particularly stories with romantic, nostalgic undertones set against distinctly Australian landscapes.

Now, Gibson has become a leading voice in the Australian online literary community, which has long been dominated by American and British creators. And while she's considering launching an actual in-person book club, for now, she's content building a community one post at a time, always prioritising authenticity over feeding the algorithm beast.

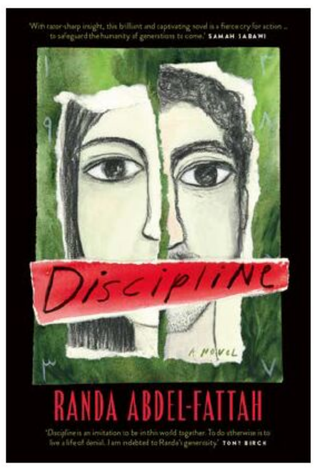
@slaggybookclub

KINGA HOWARD/UNSPLASH; COURTESY OF CAMERON GIBSON



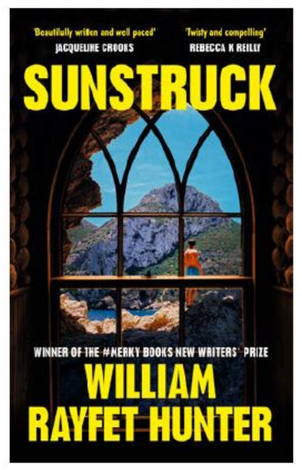
CHERRY BEACH, BY LAURA MCPHEE-BROWNE

A quietly heartbreaking, sapphic coming of age that follows Hetty and Ness: best friends who move to Canada in their early twenties, unaware their lives are about to change forever. While Ness slowly finds her feet, Hetty gets swept away. Helplessly yearning, Ness tries desperately to hold on to her best friend. A beautiful but devastating story of early womanhood, unrequited love and sapphic longing. Read in time for McPhee-Browne's upcoming third novel, *Worry Doll*.
$29.99 (Text Publishing).



DISCIPLINE, BY RANDA ABDEL-FATTAH

One of fiction's greatest powers is its ability to immerse us in stories that feel so much bigger than us. *Discipline* circulates an ensemble of imperfectly human characters, each reckoning with devastatingly real circumstances. In the face of Israel's attack on Gaza, it asks: who can and should speak up, and at what point is the price of doing so too great? A gripping work from a contemporary Palestinian-Australian voice that embodies the essential fact of art as a conduit for empathy.
$65.99 (University of Queensland Press).



SUNSTRUCK, BY WILLIAM RAYFET HUNTER

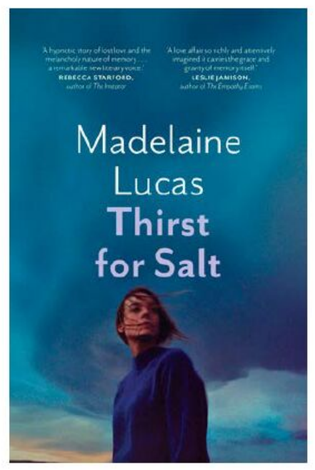
This sweaty, sexy summertime novel will suck you in with its *Saltburn*-esque allure, but the real meat of the story is in how it unravels into a dark, claustrophobic tale of manipulation, desire and mistrust. We follow as our unnamed narrator visits a friend's family's mansion in the south of France and is immediately intoxicated by the eldest brother, Felix. A bewitching story about beautiful evil people and the lives they exploit, control and ruin. It had me entirely consumed.
$34.99 (Penguin).

From local literary favourites to eye-opening works of non-fiction, Cameron Gibson shares some of her most-loved reads



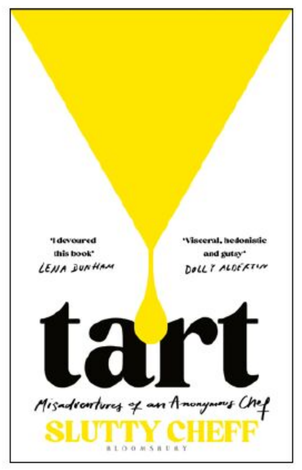
THE NEW AGE OF SEXISM, BY LAURA BATES

One of the most important and timely non-fictions I've read recently. The expansion of artificial intelligence has reached a terrifying height. It is suddenly unavoidable, touching every facet of our lives. The need for stronger regulation has reached crisis point. In this, Bates exposes the confronting and indeed horrifying implications of AI as it pertains to sexism. From the most skin-crawlingly despicable pockets of humanity to the most mundane and accessible.
$36.99 (Simon & Schuster).



THIRST FOR SALT, BY MADELAINE LUCAS

I'm a deeply nostalgic person, so this book felt like it was written for me personally. Set in a coastal town, a woman reminisces on the summer she spent in a relationship with a brooding older man. Fresh out of uni, adrift and consumed by desire, she witnesses something that unmoors her. *Thirst for Salt* encapsulates what I love most about Australian literary voices: the sensory bliss of the coastal setting, the intimacy and quiet longing. It is all so intoxicating.
$34.99 (Allen & Unwin).



TART, BY SLUTTY CHEFF

Slutty Cheff is the pseudonym of a young cook whose horny descriptions of hook-ups paired with lo-fi food pics and the occasional take-down of the boys' clubs of London's kitchen scene have not only made her go viral, they've also earned her a magazine column, a memoir and a TV show in the works. Juicy, hilarious and deeply entertaining, *Tart* is an unflinching manifesto on passion, ambition and the cost of wanting too much.
$39.99 (Bloomsbury).

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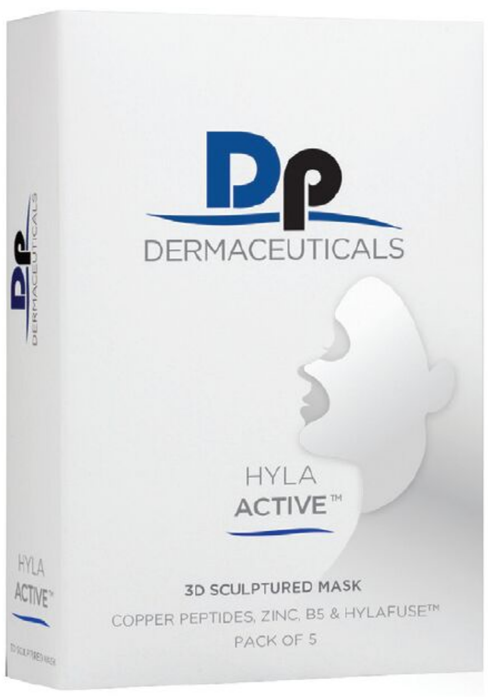
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BROW SOAP

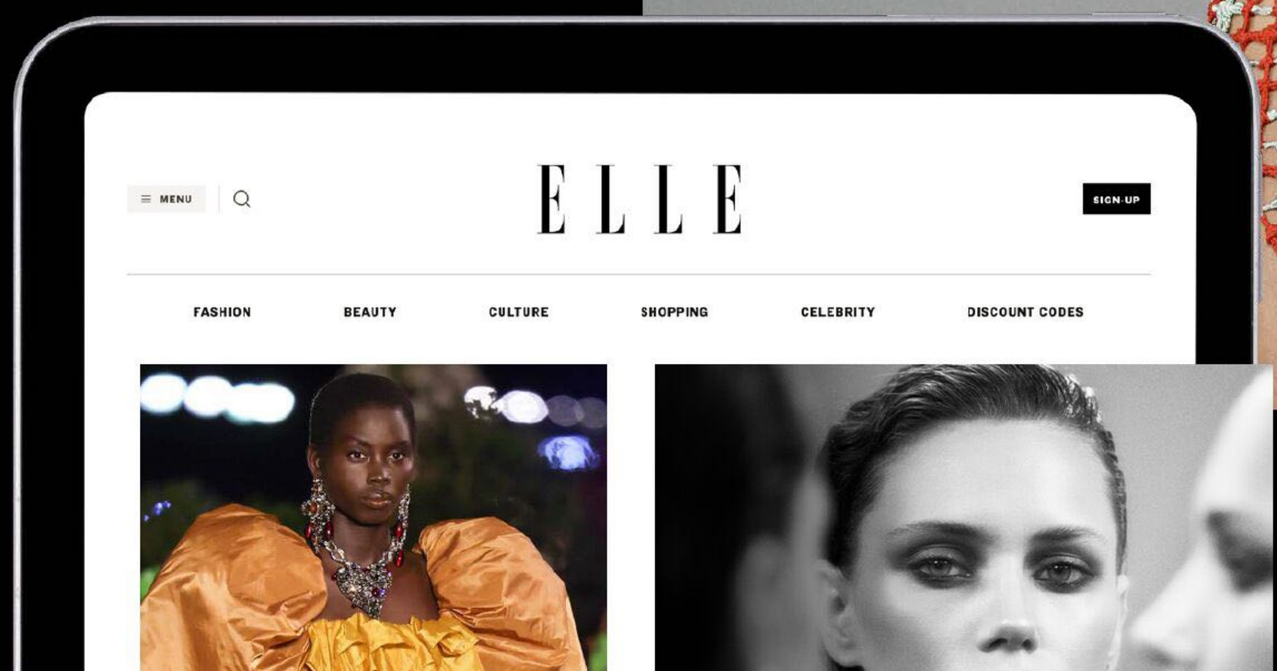
This lightweight yet strong-hold brow formula works to keep every hair sculpted and in place, leaving a fluffy, polished finish. Easy-to-use, clear and smudge-proof, it's sure to elevate your everyday look.

$29, bangonbrows.com.au



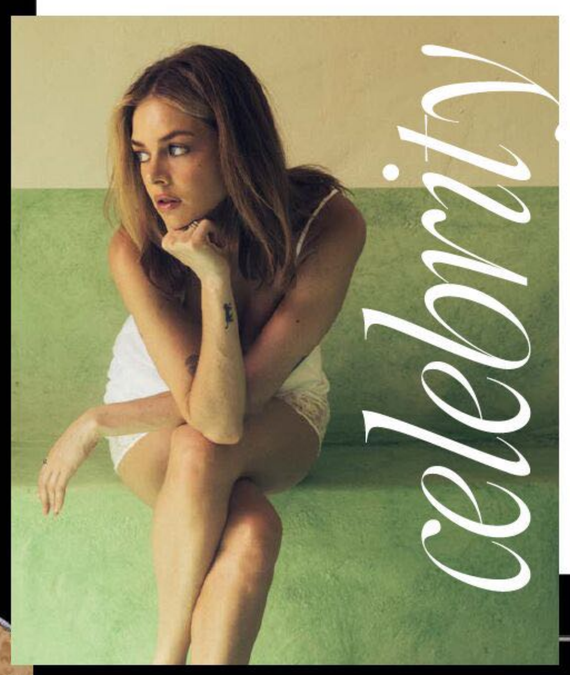


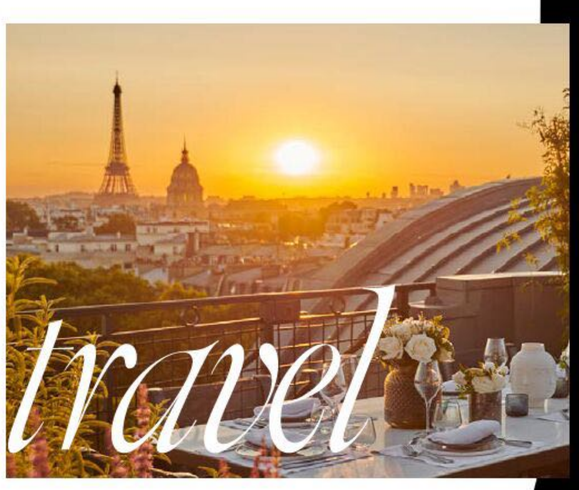
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Sunday Rose Kidman Urban wears Dior fall 2026.

NEW DAWN

Sunday Rose Kidman Urban is all grown up – and dreaming big; Tatyana Perry models Matthieu Blazy's joy-infused debut collection for Chanel; and we take the new season to the streets.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HANNAH SCOTT-STEVENSON **STYLED BY** NAOMI SMITH

Sunday's finest

NICOLE KIDMAN AND KEITH URBAN'S ELDEST DAUGHTER, SUNDAY ROSE, IS ON THE PRECIPICE OF BIG THINGS. SHE CHATS WITH *ELLE*'S EDITOR, JESSICA BAILEY, ABOUT GROWING UP IN NASHVILLE, MODELLING FOR MAJOR MAISONS AND HER DREAM OF STUDYING FILMMAKING

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HANNAH SCOTT-STEVENSON **STYLED BY** NAOMI SMITH



Sunday Rose Kidman Urban wears Dior jacket, shirt, pants and shoes (all worn throughout).

Dior Beauty worn throughout. On skin: Dior Forever Skin Wear foundation; on cheeks: Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in Rosewood; on eyes: Diorshow 5 Couleurs eye palette in Soft Cashmere, and Diorshow Overvolume mascara; and on lips: Rouge Dior On Stage lipstick in Confident Nude.

Dior dress and shoes
(both worn throughout).

Sunday Rose Kidman Urban sits atop an antique dressing table and adjusts the white ribbons on her structured jacket, readying herself for her next set of photos. Sparky, smart and as sweet as the little saffron-and-butterscotch-hued flowers on the wallpaper behind her, the model, aspiring filmmaker and eldest daughter of Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban is shooting her first Australian magazine cover today inside a film studio in Nashville.

"I was so excited when I found out I was shooting this cover," she says, her hybrid accent blending a southern American twang with a soft Australian lilt. "I love how everyone [on set] has Australian accents. It feels like I'm with my family."

Born and raised largely out of the public eye in Nashville, Tennessee — a city where, she says, "we have all four seasons in a big way; like we get lots of snow in the winter, amber leaves in the fall and then it's scorching hot in summer" — not a lot is known about fashion's new cool girl. Little facts like how a pair of Khaite jeans and Doc Martens are on high rotation in the 17-year-old's wardrobe. That she wants to work in film (more about that soon). And how her mum used to take her on photoshoot sets when she was young, sparking her curiosity about one day working in the industry. "I definitely gained a lot of interest from those experiences and especially being privileged enough to experience them at a young age," she says. "My mum is someone who has always been so creative and my biggest inspiration in life. She's a key part of everything I do."

"MY MUM IS SOMEONE WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO CREATIVE AND MY BIGGEST INSPIRATION IN LIFE. SHE'S A KEY PART OF EVERYTHING I DO"

In October 2024, Sunday burst onto the fashion scene when she made her runway debut for Miu Miu's spring/summer 2025 collection. "[During the show] I was thinking about my chemistry homework and hoping my teacher would give me an extension on the deadline," she says with a laugh. "I was also thinking about how I was so excited to see everyone who was sitting at the show. But when I got out onto the runway, I couldn't see a single person because I was so focused on what was ahead of me and walking in those heels." That walk is strong, courtesy of a little coaching from Mrs Prada, who advised the young model to take large steps to appear elegant.

A year later, Sunday made her debut for Dior at the house's spring/summer 2026 show in Paris. It was a landmark moment for the maison, marking Jonathan Anderson's highly anticipated debut as the new creative director for women's ready-to-wear. In a grey blouse with black tie detailing and black trousers, Sunday was a star in another star's show. "I think Jonathan has really just taken [Dior] to another level, one that no-one really would have even thought there was," Sunday says of the designer's modern-meets-archival vision. "And he's doing it all while paying tribute to the old Dior, but putting his own new vibe into everything he designs."

A couple of months after the show, Sunday presented Anderson with the Designer of the Year prize at the British Fashion Awards, strengthening their flourishing friendship. "When I first met him, I just remember thinking how cool and creative he was," she says. "It's truly the most special privilege to be able to work and spend time with him. He deserves all the admiration he receives."







OPPOSITE PAGE
Dior jacket and pants (both worn throughout).
THIS PAGE Dior dress.



Dior cardigan and pants.

BEAUTY NOTE
A wash of shadow on the eyelids adds a subtle sophistication and balances the prettiness of a flushed cheek. Diorshow 5 Couleurs eye palette in Soft Cashmere, $121, and Diorshow Overvolume mascara, $69.



Dior jacket and blouse
(both worn throughout).

Growing up, we all absorb, even subconsciously, certain aspects of our parents' attitudes to work and discipline. For Sunday, her parents placed a strong focus on setting wheels in motion in order to achieve one's ambitions. "Something that's always been followed in my house is doing, not just saying," she says. "It basically means that if you say you're going to do something, stick to your word and do it. Don't just talk about how much you want to, but actually put your mind to it and get it done."

Unbeknown to most, Sunday dreams of going to university to study filmmaking. She cites *Parasite*, the 2019 Academy Award-winning dark comedy-thriller directed by Bong Joon Ho, as the film that sparked her interest in movie making. "I've watched it, like, eight times," she proudly admits. Interestingly, she favours psychological horror films — her current top pick being Osgood Perkins' *Longlegs* (2024). Like her mum, who famously worked with 27 female film directors in eight years, Sunday has a love of women directors and lists Greta Gerwig among her favourites, "even though she doesn't do horror".

"The biggest piece of industry advice Mum has given to me is to always be on time," Sunday says. "There's always going to be something with an early call time that you don't want to get up for, but it's really important to be on time because it shows that you're prepared and grateful to be there." (Editor's note: our shoot had a 7am call time in freezing, snowy Nashville. Let the record show: our cover girl was ever the professional and bang on time.)

Being a young person in today's world is already difficult to navigate — in fact, what age can we really say we've worked out who we are, who we love, as well as heartbreak, friendships, career milestones and skin routines? As women, it can feel never-ending. But being young *and* in the spotlight surely adds another layer to all of this, particularly when it comes to keyboard warriors. So how does Sunday manage work, school, travel and online chatter? "Honestly, being in school is actually really helpful for all of that," she says. "The privilege of having these experiences and meeting so many new people is so amazing, but as a teenager it's so easy to get sucked in to all of it so fast. So being able to come back [to Nashville] and keep that perspective of being back at high school keeps me grounded."

"THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING THESE EXPERIENCES AND MEETING SO MANY NEW PEOPLE IS SO AMAZING, BUT AS A TEENAGER IT'S SO EASY TO GET SUCKED IN TO ALL OF IT SO FAST"

She continues, "I've travelled my whole life and my mum is a really good traveller, so she has taught me how to be one, too, which makes it so fun to travel and enjoy all the different places."

On that note, Sunday will turn 18 in July and is headed to Europe with family and friends to celebrate. "I am super excited," she says. "Even though I love being 17 and will be sad when that's over, 18 is obviously such a fun age." As one last hurrah before she officially becomes an adult — and as her first Australian magazine cover hits newsstands — Sunday will travel to her second home, Australia, for the American spring break. "I attended school in Sydney for a while, so some of my closest friends are there, and they are always so fun to see," she says, her smile wide. "My favourite thing about Australia has to be the beaches and all the acai bowls. We don't have them as much in Nashville."

Tonight, after our shoot, Sunday is going to her school's winter formal. It's a crazy, fast-paced lifestyle, but one she's well poised for and, as these pictures prove, more than worthy of.



Dior dress.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Dior dress.

BEAUTY NOTE
For a super-romantic feel, add a hint of flush to cheeks and pair with a blurred lip in a rosy pink. Dior Backstage Rosy Glow Stick in Rosewood, $79, and Rouge Dior On Stage lipstick in Confident Nude, $75.





BEAUTY NOTE
Freshen up skin with a soft-matte foundation that blurs imperfections but still looks natural. Dior Forever Skin Wear, $107.





OPPOSITE PAGE
Dior jacket, blouse and skirt.

Hair by Gonn Kinoshita at The Wall Group; makeup by Nadia Tayeh at A-Frame Agency; manicure by Cenita Scott at The Only Agency. Nashville production by Agency MJ; Sydney production by Ēminente Creative Production. Hannah Scott-Stevenson is represented by Artboxblack. Beauty by Dior Beauty.





Chanel jacket, $13,900, top, $8600, skirt, $6770, shoes, $2470, and earrings, $1810.
OPPOSITE PAGE
Chanel dress, $23,410, and earrings, $2470.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAPHNE NGUYEN
STYLED BY NAOMI SMITH

UNDER THE HELM OF MATTHIEU BLAZY, THE FUTURE OF CHANEL LOOKS BRIGHT – AND FULL OF JOY. FIRST NATIONS MODEL TATYANA PERRY, WHO MADE HER INTERNATIONAL RUNWAY DEBUT IN THE MAISON'S S/S 2026 SHOW, TRIES ON THE COLLECTION AGAIN, JUST FOR *ELLE*



OPPOSITE PAGE
Chanel dress, $38,780,
and clutch bag, $45,730.
THIS PAGE Chanel jacket,
$12,250, pants, $6950,
briefs, $2930, belt, $1660,
and bag, $15,090.

Chanel jacket, $22,500, vest, $20,580, skirt, $15,000, bag, $23,780, shoes, $1880, and necklaces, $4020 (flower), $2290 (short pearl), $6400 (long pearl), and $4370 (red bead).

OPPOSITE PAGE

Chanel top, $7680, skirt, $22,130, briefs, $2930, belt, $1660, shoes, $2190, earrings, $1170, and necklace, $7300.





Chanel shirt, $7130, skirt, $11,340, shoes, $2190, and earrings, $1740.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Chanel top, $12,710, and earrings, $1170.





Chanel jacket, $11,340, pants, $6040, briefs, $2930, belt, $1660, bag, $22,500, and shoes, $2190.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Chanel shirt, $6950, skirt, $6950, and earrings, $1740.

Model: Tatyana Perry at The Scouted. Hair by Rory Rice at MAP Ltd; makeup by Samantha Patrikopoulos at Vivien's Creative. Production by Nicola Hanratty. Daphne Nguyen is represented by B&A Reps.


Chanel

Givenchy by Sarah Burton dress, price on application, and shoes, $2054; stylist's own briefs.

Forward focus

LED BY A FLURRY OF CREATIVE-DIRECTOR DEBUTS, THE SPRING/SUMMER 2026 SEASON DELIVERED FRESH NEW TAKES ON TEXTURE, SHAPE AND PROPORTION

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDER SALADRIGAS
STYLED BY JENNY KENNEDY



Celine jacket, bra, pants and scarf, all price on application; stylist's own shoes.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Chloé top, $3956, swimsuit, $776, and shoes, $226.







Gucci coat, $19,086, shoes, $1828, and earrings, $1199.

Bottega Veneta shirt, skirt, shoes and ring, all price on application.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Louis Vuitton shirt, $3141, and skirt, $7657; stylist's own shoes.





Balenciaga top, skirt and hat, all price on application.

OPPOSITE PAGE
Dior dress, price on application, and shoes, $1865.

Hair by Anton Alexander at Streeters; makeup by Mitch Yoshida at Streeters. Model: Lineisy Montero at Next. Production by Gigi Guldas. Alexander Saladrigas is represented by De La Revolución and Rumeur. Jenny Kennedy is represented by C/O Management.



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Keiynan Lonsdale wears Polo Ralph Lauren shirt, $289, hats, $349 (top), and $129, and shoes, price on application; stylist's own socks.

PEACHY KEIYNAN

Self-proclaimed "soft boy" Keiynan Lonsdale contains multitudes. He answers all our pressing questions ahead of his new film, *War Machine*; and how to dress like an F1 driver.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAKE TERREY **STYLED BY** PATRICK ZACZKIEWICZ

RALPH

LAUREN

Keiynan Lonsdale wears Polo Ralph Lauren top, $159, long-sleeve top (around neck), $339, knit (around waist), $499, pants, $379, hat, $349, and belt, $119 (worn throughout).

OPPOSITE PAGE
Polo Ralph Lauren cardigan, $899, vest, $999, shirt, $289, hat, $349, and tie, $219 (all worn throughout).



IN HIS ELEMENT

AS HIS NEW FILM *WAR MACHINE* HITS OUR SCREENS, ACTOR KEIYNAN LONSDALE TALKS RISK, RESILIENCE AND RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAKE TERREY
STYLED BY PATRICK ZACZKIEWICZ
WORDS BY SARAH NOONAN





Polo Ralph Lauren jackets, $1899 and $519 (around waist), shirt, $219, jeans, $539 (worn throughout), tie, $219 (worn throughout), and bag, price on application.

Keiynan Lonsdale likes to say he "came out of the womb dancing". It's not hyperbole — he was, in fact, on stage by the age of four. Not long after, he was layering cassette tapes to remix his favourite artists into a different sound, all before he could see over the kitchen counter. Dancing came first, then music. Acting, he says, arrived later.

"I just thought it was fun," he says of those early drama classes. "But it wasn't until I was called up to step in for the lead as an understudy in my first musical that people basically told me … 'You're an actor.'"

There's an ease to the way that Lonsdale describes his creative life, as though it unfolded naturally rather than being something he pursued. Even now, nearly two decades into a career that has stretched from cult series such as *Dance Academy* and *The Flash* to breakout rom-com *Love, Simon*, he doesn't speak like someone who chased fame. If anything, he followed instinct — which is, perhaps, why his latest project, *War Machine*, feels so at odds with him. The Netflix sci-fi action film places Lonsdale inside the tightly regulated world of military life — an environment that rewards discipline and endurance, where overt emotion is subdued in service of the mission. For someone who has built a career on fluidity through music, dance and self-expression, that rigidity proved both confronting and unexpectedly compelling.

"I was very fascinated with the uniformity of the military," he says. "They're soldiers; they have to strip themselves of a certain amount of expression that's not really useful when you're doing your job." While the film demanded intense physical stamina, including gruelling boot camp sequences, the greater challenge for Lonsdale was internal: learning not only how to enter the role, but how to step out of it. In that sense, *War Machine* marks a quiet turning point for him.

When we speak, Lonsdale is in Sydney, rehearsing at the Sydney Opera House for his theatrical debut in Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*. Set during the height of the AIDS crisis, the production is emotionally heavy, politically urgent and, for Lonsdale, unexpectedly healing. Here, he reflects on *War Machine*, queer storytelling, resisting industry pressure and the person who inspires him the most in life.

"I LOVE BEING PUSHED TO THE LIMIT AND GOING AS FAR AS I CAN … I WAS ABLE TO APPLY THAT MENTALITY TO OTHER THINGS IN MY LIFE"

ELLE: *War Machine* is one of your biggest projects yet. What drew you to the film?

KEIYNAN LONSDALE: Since I was a kid, as much as I was a sensitive, soft boy, I really liked action, fighting and superheroes. I also love doing things that are super challenging. The script had this constant drive to it, but also a beautiful depth, and I think it's very tricky in action films to be able to find that sort of emotional connection. Despite playing characters that in many ways have to strip themselves of a certain amount of expression to do their job, there was a warmth there, and that fascinated me. Also, the uniformity of the military mixed with this sci-fi element was really interesting. It was very much a project that both scared me and excited me.

ELLE: From the trailer, it seems like an intense project. Was there a moment that pushed you further than you expected?

KL: Honestly, every day on set. Sometimes I'd read the script for the next scene and think, *Oh, this will be chill*, and then suddenly you're fighting for your life, running down a hill you weren't prepared for. We had a small amount of training, but they were pretty much expecting us to be ready to go. The ranger training scenes were particularly challenging: climbing ropes, jumping over obstacle courses and doing hours of bear crawls in the heat. Maybe it's not the healthiest thing, but I kind of love being pushed to the limit and going as far as I can. I can also be an overthinker at times, but [on set] there was no time to do that. The only thing I could think was, *You've just got to make it happen*.

Polo Ralph Lauren coat, $2559, top, $139, jumper (on bag), $689, pants, $679 (worn throughout), and shoes, price on application (worn throughout); stylist's own socks (worn throughout).

OPPOSITE PAGE
Polo Ralph Lauren top, $219, and caps, $99 each.


Sweety
AUSTRALIA





OPPOSITE PAGE
Polo Ralph Lauren trench coat, $2159, knit, $279, and shirt, $209.
THIS PAGE Polo Ralph Lauren jacket, $269, shirt, $219, pants, $399, tie, $219, and belt, $159 (all worn throughout).

Polo Ralph Lauren jacket, $2199, and cap, $129.

I was really proud of myself for leaning into that and walking away from the project able to apply that mentality to other things in my life.

ELLE: You're currently rehearsing for a production of *The Normal Heart*, at the Sydney Opera House until March 14. That's quite a pivot.

KL: It's the opposite extreme entirely. The show is quite heavy emotionally, as it's based on the AIDS epidemic in the '80s, and my character in particular is focused on patient care, so there's a lot of emotional weight. But it brings a tonne of presence out of you, both on and off the stage. For something that I maybe wouldn't have been able to carry earlier in my life, it feels great to be able to honour it appropriately. Particularly as it's my first time doing a play and being surrounded by majority gay guys to tell this story. Truly, it's been one of the most nourishing experiences.

ELLE: You've been part of some influential queer stories including *Love, Simon* and now *The Normal Heart*. How does it feel to see the impact those projects have had?

KL: With *The Normal Heart*, even though it was written in the '80s and first premiered during that time, its relevance now is quite astonishing to me. I think in order to go forward, you need to understand what's happened in the past. That's something that's very present for me in this show. *Love, Simon* was a big one and created this kind of cultural shift that I don't know if any of us could have expected. Now, seeing the impact of [gay ice hockey drama series] *Heated Rivalry*, which has caused a whole other cultural shift forward, is particularly warming. We've always known that gay is sexy and spicy and fun and beautiful, but [*Heated Rivalry*] really went so far and merged all of that with tenderness and pain. It makes me excited for the kind of queer love stories and queer realities yet to come.

ELLE: Working on larger productions in the US, you described feeling like a fish out of water. How did you navigate that period?

KL: It was a shock to the system. I went from teaching dance classes in Sydney six days a week to save money to get over to America, to being on one of the biggest film sets in the world for [sci-fi action movie series] *Divergent*. With some of the biggest stars around the world, too. There weren't many Black Australian entertainers in those spaces. People didn't quite know what to make of me, and I didn't always know when to speak up or when to listen. I wasn't comfortable with myself, to a degree, but I knew how to be professional and give something my all.

ELLE: During challenging roles, have you ever had moments when your identity felt hard to hold on to?

KL: During *War Machine*, I actually called one of my old mentors because I started to feel very insecure and like I needed to perform my masculinity for everyone on set, even off-camera. I could feel myself dimming. In my career, my biggest struggles have been when I'm home at the end of the day and not knowing how to hold that character's energy or let go of it. There are a lot of people in this industry who prepare you to get into a role, but there's very little support to help you get out of a role. So I called her, and she helped me come back to myself. She gave me the tools to find my safe spaces and feel empowered with all versions of myself. And after that, I ended up having the best shoot ever.

ELLE: Outside of your work, who's the woman who shaped you the most?

KL: My mum. She raised six kids on her own in Western Sydney, so I learnt a lot about the power of a woman, the vulnerabilities of a woman and, in many ways, a lot of the pain. She taught me to be strong and courageous but also nurtured my sensitivities and reassured me that I could dream big, even if the world didn't quite see it yet. She still teaches me to this day.

ELLE: If you could give your younger self advice?

KL: Lean into that feeling of creativity. It doesn't quite matter what form it takes — the muscle of creativity is what you need to flex. Also, lean into the things that frighten you. Sensitivities are a strength; they teach you about the world. And spend less time doubting whether you're deserving of living a dream-filled life. Oh, and don't neglect admin — business and financial awareness. Those things are actually important.

War Machine *is streaming now on Netflix.*

"I WENT FROM TEACHING DANCE CLASSES IN SYDNEY SIX DAYS A WEEK TO BEING ON ONE OF THE BIGGEST FILM SETS IN THE WORLD"





Grooming by Gavin Anesbury at Vivien's Creative. Jake Terrey is represented by Hart & Co.

NEED FOR **SPEED**

TOMMY HILFIGER AND THE CADILLAC FORMULA 1 TEAM HAVE UNITED WITH A COLLECTION THAT TAKES THE THRILL OF THE TRACK OFF THE GRID

WORDS BY SARAH NOONAN







TOP GEAR

The collection takes cues from the Cadillac Formula 1 Team in the form of varsity jackets, driver caps and co-branded tees in red, white and black. Meanwhile chevrons, checkered-flag graphics and subtle speedometer motifs nod to life on the circuit. Colour-blocked hoodies and coach jackets rework heritage staples with a signature American prep, and replica T-shirts and polos offer authentic race-day style for diehard fans. Cropped silhouettes and tailored finishes bring a modern twist, while metallic accents and contrast trims give the looks that street-style edge. Call it the unofficial uniform of the 2026 grid.

A few years ago, nobody paid much attention to what Formula 1 drivers wore when they weren't in their race suits. Their job was speed, not style. Somewhere between pit lanes and press passes, though, the sport transformed into one of fashion's most unlikely front rows.

What changed was not the sport itself, but how it was seen. Instagram turned paddock arrivals into daily lookbooks, the hit Netflix television series *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* recast drivers as personalities rather than just athletes, and sponsorship logos began to share space with personal style. Suddenly, what happened off the track felt just as compelling as what happened on it.

Tommy Hilfiger was one of the first brands to join this conversation. In the '90s, the label experimented with motorsport partnerships, threading style through the paddock long before 'fashiontainment' became industry shorthand. Its involvement with *F1: The Movie* in 2025 cemented its role as a cultural translator between racing and everyday style. Now, that legacy takes a new turn with Tommy Hilfiger x Cadillac Formula 1 Team — a partnership uniting two American icons on a global stage.

Arriving ahead of the Cadillac Formula 1 Team's 2026 debut season, the collaboration brings the spirit of the paddock into everyday wear. Its energy is seen in the lines, colourways and playful nods to racing, while remaining unmistakably Tommy Hilfiger. At the centre of the campaign is Checo Pérez, Tommy Hilfiger's global menswear ambassador. A fan favourite and cultural force, he joins teammate Valtteri Bottas in giving the collection a distinctly modern interpretation of classic American cool.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Tommy Hilfiger x Cadillac Formula 1 Team T-shirt, $119, jumper, $199, polo, $169, jacket, $499, and cap, $69.95; F1 drivers Valtteri Bottas and Checo Pérez.

COURTESY OF TOMMY HILFIGER

NATIO

DREAM SKIN
CC CREAM

dream skin glow meets
lightweight colour correction



available in 8 shades

pure mineral CC cream
with SPF protection

Available in department stores, leading
pharmacies and **natio.com.au** from 16 April

ELLE

beauty & wellness

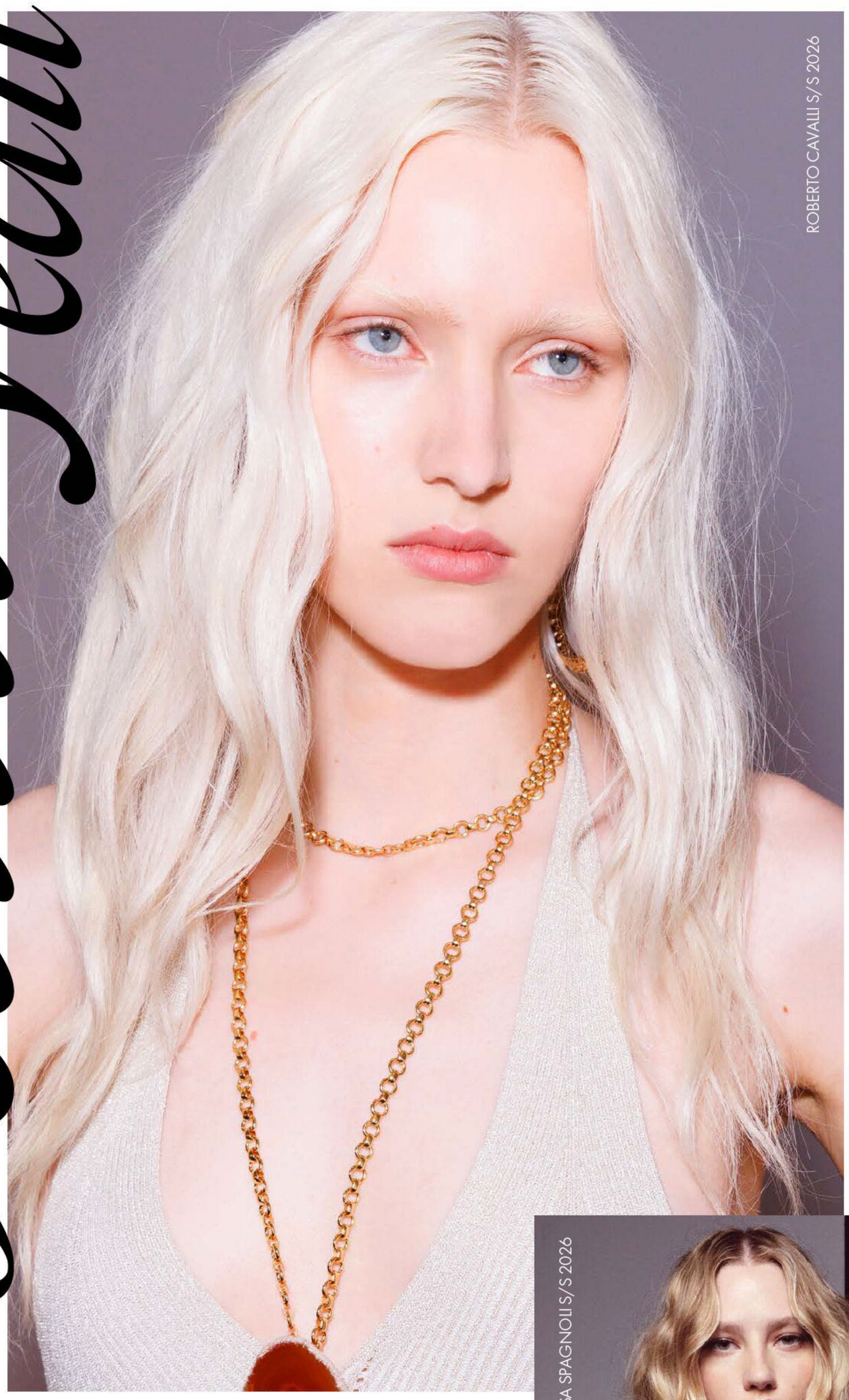


GETTY IMAGES

FACE OFF

An exclusive conversation with Daisy Edgar-Jones; the best new beauty products as voted by *ELLE*'s international editors; the dark side of 'wellness'; and why you should have a sleep-in tomorrow.

the beauty edit





1

BLUE MOOD

Denim, our forever wardrobe staple, is set to become a mainstay in our makeup bags, too, with the Chanel Denim collection giving us a new way to love our failsafe blues. Created under the creative direction of Cometes Collective member Valentina Li, the collection offers vibrant blues, powdery pinks and light-catching golds and silvers for eyes, lips and cheeks, proving blue is definitely back.

1 Chanel Noir Allure mascara in Indigo, $77 **2** Chanel Denim Les 4 Ombres eyeshadow palette in Coco Jean, $149.



2



Hair & now

Two new hair innovations promise to give your strands main-character energy



LIQUID ASSET

We love a hair product that works as hard as we do. Lightweight with a dry finish, Bumble and Bumble's clever Styling Oil helps to boost shine and hydration, ward off split ends and reduce frizz in straight to very curly hair.

Bumble and Bumble Styling Oil, $41.



BLOWN AWAY

Want lightning-fast polish? ghd delivers. With an ultra-fast motor and the brand's patented Halo dual-airflow technology, this hair dryer is built for speed – without heat damage. It has plenty of smarts, too, including a memory mode that locks in your preferred settings.

ghd Speed hair dryer, $595.



1

2

SO CHEEKY

So buttery and beautifully blendable, Mecca's popular cream blush sticks now come in new shades that melt seamlessly into the skin and make cheekbones pop.

1 Mecca Max Off Duty Blush Stick in Crush, $22.

PURPLE REIGN

Don't be intimidated by the purple formula – this serum-based blush reacts to your skin's pH to add just a hint of custom colour (and a load of hydration) to leave skin dewy.

2 Dolce & Gabbana Violet Liquid Blush, $65.

First flush

These new blushes meld foolproof formulas with beautifully glowy shades, for a fresh, healthy-looking complexion

Lip service

You've got one in your car, your bag, your desk ... But you could always do with one more lip balm

CLIP ART

With buildable colour and a water-to-oil formula, Laneige's lip stains deliver enviable, long-lasting colour in a clippable bottle that you can take with you anywhere.

1 Laneige JuicePop Box Lip Tint in Disco Coral, $30.

TWIST & SHOUT

Known for formulations that elevate your look and serve your skin, Nars has released a new range of lip balms designed to perform – think nourishing, high-shine formulas with the perfect amount of sultry colour.

2 Nars Afterglow Lip Balm in Dolce Vita, $52.

1

2



Pump it

From top to toe, nothing streamlines your day like an easy-to-use pump pack

BODY

Lightweight yet hydrating, Osea's body lotion blends Undaria seaweed, hyaluronic acid, peptides and turmeric to moisturise and firm while boosting brightness.

1 Osea Undaria Algae Body Lotion, $82.

HANDS

Immerse yourself in refreshing rainforest notes every time you wash your hands. With an ingredient list that is 85 per cent natural and a formulation that's deeply nourishing, it both grounds and elevates.

2 Perfumer H Rain Wood Hand Wash, $126.

HAIR

Dosed with botanical extracts and hyaluronic acid, this super-hydrating shampoo works on both scalp and hair health by locking in moisture – and will look cute in your shower stall, too.

3 Act+Acre Daily Hydro Hydrating Shampoo, $66.

FACE

Antioxidant-rich ashwagandha and chaga mushroom extract, hydrating snow mushroom and soothing oat oil lipids make this cleanser as gentle as it is effective.

4 Youth to the People Adaptogen Cleanser, $67.



GIUSEPPE DI MORABITO S/S 2026

HIGH NOTE

When Rihanna became the face of Dior's iconic J'adore fragrance last year, we expected big things. Enter: J'adore Intense – a sunny yet sensual scent that embodies the singer's modern femininity. A richer version of the original, the scent blends notes of jasmine, ylang-ylang, rose and violet with a base of sandalwood and vanilla for a warm, gourmand finish.

Dior J'adore Intense eau de parfum, 100ml, $310.



ERMANNO SCERVINO S/S 2026

Just dew it

Our favourite products for clear, glowy skin

FIRST GLASS

Built for glassy-looking skin, this new serum from Drunk Elephant uses a blend of one per cent fermented poly amino acid, a 24-hour hydration water complex and a super amino acid to help add radiance and boost skin firmness.

1 Drunk Elephant Amino Rain Glasswater Serum, $100.

TECH NECK

With a complex of stable vitamin C combined with Augustinus Bader's advanced TFC8 technology to enhance formula performance, this lightweight serum helps refine texture, even tone and increase luminosity.

2 Augustinus Bader The Vitamin C Serum, $595.



GETTY IMAGES; TIM ELKAÏM. WORDS BY SALLY HUNWICK



Heaven scent

For a spritz of something sweet, but not sickly

JUST DESSERTS

Notes of marshmallow and peach nectar are combined with sweetened rice milk and vanilla for a fragrance that smells like cotton sheets and sweet dreams.

1 DedCool Motchi Milk eau de parfum, 50ml, $155.

CHERRY ON TOP

Built for after dark, this scent opens with notes of black cherry and orange brandy, before revealing warm caramel and soft leather.

2 Phlur Cherry Stem eau de parfum, 50ml, $171.

HOLIDAY MODE

With uplifting notes of prickly pear, bergamot and jasmine, this sunset-inspired fragrance refreshes hair and transports you instantly to the Mediterranean.

3 Diptyque Ilio Hair Mist, $119.



Base camp

Two foundations that nail the matte-radiance brief

SOFT FOCUS

Hermès' new foundation blurs imperfections while boosting radiance, creating a near-invisible finish that makes skin look like skin, only better. With 34 shades and three undertones to choose from, a precise skin match is practically guaranteed.

1 Hermès Plein Air Luminous Matte Skincare Foundation, $240.

GO THE DISTANCE

An updated classic, Estée Lauder's cult matte foundation is now longer-wearing, more hydrating and buildable, with enhanced skincare benefits and oil control. One pump will deliver a radiant, filtered finish that lasts all day.

2 Estée Lauder Double Wear Stay-in-Place Makeup SPF 10, $83.



Coming up Daisy

BRITISH ACTOR DAISY EDGAR-JONES IS PUTTING HER BEST FACE FORWARD AS ESTĒE LAUDER'S NEW GLOBAL BRAND AMBASSADOR

WORDS BY SALLY HUNWICK



There's a quiet confidence to Daisy Edgar-Jones. With innate style, an enviable haircut and pristine makeup, she possesses that elusive kind of presence that doesn't demand attention, but commands it anyway. Since shooting to global fame in the television adaptation of Sally Rooney's bestselling novel *Normal People* — starring as Marianne alongside Paul Mescal in the story of a steamy on-off romance — Edgar-Jones has carved out a career defined not by hype, but by intelligent creative choices.

In the years since that breakout role in 2020, Edgar-Jones has shown herself to be one of the most compelling actors right now. From critically acclaimed indies to major studio projects, she moves effortlessly between intimacy and scale, with performances that are both nuanced and highly believable.

The past few years have been especially prolific. Edgar-Jones stepped confidently into blockbuster territory with *Twisters*, the high-octane 2024 disaster sequel in which she starred opposite Glen Powell. She then switched gears into romantic drama with *On Swift Horses*, playing the restless Muriel alongside Jacob Elordi. Other notable projects included roles in the sci-fi series *War of the Worlds* and the Reese Witherspoon-produced *Where the Crawdads Sing*.

In 2026, Edgar-Jones shows no signs of slowing down. As well as the thriller *A Place in Hell*, with Michelle Williams and Andrew Scott, the actor is set to star in the Georgia Oakley-directed adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (with a screenplay by Australian author and *ELLE* contributor Diana Reid). She plays the practically minded Elinor Dashwood — a part that feels tailor-made for Edgar-Jones' quiet emotional precision. Continuing her instinctive pull towards complex women and intelligent storytelling, she will also appear in the period thriller *Bad Bridget*, alongside fellow British actor Emilia Jones.

Time and time again, Edgar-Jones demonstrates a perfect balance between her innate softness and powerful acting chops, with performances that are hard to turn away from. Off-screen, her appeal is equally magnetic. Understated, articulate and refreshingly self-possessed, she embodies a new kind of Hollywood glamour; one rooted in uniqueness and authenticity.

It's little wonder, then, that she has come on board as the global brand ambassador for Estée Lauder. She's fronting the campaign for the newly reimagined Double Wear Stay-in-Place Makeup, the brand's much-loved foundation that has been relaunched with new buildability, breathability and a matte finish that allows skin to look fresh and natural. *ELLE* talks exclusively to Edgar-Jones about her signature style, approach to beauty and how she deals with pressure.

"BEAUTY HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING I ASSOCIATE WITH CREATIVITY AND SELF-EXPRESSION. AS AN ACTOR, IT'S ALSO A BIG PART OF BUILDING A CHARACTER"

ELLE: You always look modern and effortless. How would you describe your approach to beauty?

DAISY EDGAR-JONES: I think my approach to beauty is about enhancing what I have naturally and trying to make my skin look as healthy and as glowing as possible. I'm very on top of my skincare and I like the warmth of a bronzed look with lots of blush for a healthy-looking glow.

ELLE: As an actor, your face tells so many stories. How do you look after your skin during long shoots and heavy makeup days?

DEJ: I'm so good about my moisturiser now. I've really learnt that is the best thing to withstand a long shoot. Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair is something I can't live without. It's so hydrating and feels so soothing to put on; it's a real self-care moment.

ELLE: Are there any skincare rituals that you rely on to reset, especially when you're tired or travelling?

DEJ: Putting on loads of moisturiser and sleeping with it on helps a lot. And when I fly, I don't wear any makeup.

ELLE: You're a global ambassador for Estée Lauder. What initially resonated with you about the brand?

DEJ: I have always admired how the brand celebrates confidence and individuality. There's this elegance and strength to the Estée Lauder brand that I find inspiring, especially as a young woman navigating the industry.

ELLE: What does beauty mean to you, and how does that idea show up in the way you wear makeup?

DEJ: Beauty has always been something I associate with creativity and self-expression. As an actor, it's also a big part of building a character; it helps you step into someone else's shoes. I love how transformative makeup can be. Whether it's for a role or just going out with friends, makeup helps me express a different side of myself. I find makeup really fun to play with.

ELLE: Is there a particular Estée Lauder product you regularly reach for?

DEJ: I love the new Double Wear Stay-in-Place foundation. I often leave the house for hours on end and don't have time to come back and redo my face. It's so long-lasting and durable, but the new formula is very lightweight and easy to apply. I love the mattifying element — you know your makeup is going to last but your skin still looks like your skin, which is kind of perfect for me.

ELLE: How would you describe your personal style?

DEJ: Honestly, it's quite hard to describe because it changes so much. I'm not a method actor by any means, but I'm definitely influenced by the job that I'm on. So if I'm playing a character that's more feminine, I like to reach for dresses and clothes that make me feel like that. Then, if I have a character who is very fashion-conscious, then I can be quite experimental with what I wear. But what I mostly reach for is, I would say, comfy.

ELLE: Your red-carpet looks often strike a balance between elegance and ease. How involved are you in shaping those moments?

DEJ: I'm quite involved. I work with an incredible stylist, Dani Michelle, who has made such a difference for me. I have so much fun with red carpets and fashion. She always makes me feel like such an elevated version of myself, but she also knows how to make clothes fit your body so you feel your most confident. But I definitely love to be involved; I love fashion.

ELLE: Have you ever felt pressure to look a certain way in the industry? How do you protect your sense of self?

COURTESY OF ESTÉE LAUDER



"I TRY TO LEAN INTO WHAT MAKES ME FEEL CONFIDENT AND HAPPY IN MY SKIN. IT'S SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY"

DEJ: I think there is always pressure all around, especially given that we are so online now, growing up with Instagram and filters. But I've always found that when I meet people, their confidence is the most attractive thing to me. So I think that's really taught me to let parts of myself go that I can't change (or wish I could) and try to lean into what makes me feel confident and happy in my skin. It's something you have to kind of practice every day.

ELLE: When work is intense, what's the one small ritual that helps you feel like yourself again?

DEJ: I would say journalling. It's a great form of self-reflection and a way to get in touch with yourself, even if it's just 10 minutes.

ELLE: What have you learnt from makeup artists and skin experts that has genuinely changed how you care for your skin?

DEJ: I used to have very acne-prone and oily skin, especially in my teenage years, and I always thought that I should really cleanse and dry out my skin to get rid of the oil. But actually, I learnt from experts over the years that the oilier your skin, the more moisture you should put on it because that's what it actually needs.

ELLE: When do you feel most like yourself?

DEJ: When I'm with people I love, who allow me to fully be myself.



INSIDE DAISY'S MAKEUP BAG

The actor credits her perfect porcelain skin to being diligent with moisturiser and following a solid night-time skincare routine. Here are a few of her go-to beauty products.



1 Estée Lauder Glossy Pout Lip Oil in Rose Water, $48 **2** Estée Lauder DayWear Multi-Protection Anti-Oxidant 24H-Moisture Creme SPF 15, $95 **3** Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Synchronized Multi-Recovery Complex, $199 **4** Estée Lauder Double Wear Stay-in-Place Makeup SPF 10 in 2C3, $83.

Repossi ring.

ELLE
INTERNATIONAL
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2026

AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

HERE ARE THE SMARTEST, HARDEST-WORKING, MOST INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS, AS SELECTED BY *ELLE* EDITORS FROM 50 EDITIONS WORLDWIDE. ADD TO CART

PHOTOGRAPHED BY THIEMO SANDER **STYLED BY** CELINE BOURREAU

ELLE INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY AWARDS 2026

THE BEST FACE CARE

CLEANSER

BIODERMA SENSIBIO H_2O, $32.99.

"Bioderma's micellar water is the most popular in the world (the lines of international customers outside certain Parisian pharmacies speaks volumes), and this sensitive skin formula is particularly impressive. Makeup artists use it by the litre during fashion weeks for its effectiveness, making them its best ambassadors."

ELISABETH MARTORELL
BEAUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *ELLE* FRANCE

DAILY CARE

TATCHA THE DEWY SKIN CREAM, $160.

"It delivers a radiant, hydrated glow and feels lightweight yet nourishing. Its silky texture melts into the skin, leaving a dewy, fresh finish that's perfect for layering under makeup or wearing alone."

DAMLA DURAK
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* TURKEY

ESSENTIAL SERUM

AESOP LUCENT FACIAL REFINER, $120.

"With once-a-week use, I can feel my skin becoming more refined and smoother, and the complexion more even and radiant."

SANDY HSU
DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *ELLE* TAIWAN

ANTI-AGEING

SISLEY SISLEŸA L'INTĒGRAL ANTI-ĀGE LONGEVITY ESSENTIAL SERUM, $820.

"The product that makes you notice a real 'before' and 'after' – especially comforting when some signs of ageing no longer improve easily. A lifesaver."

FRANCESCA VARASI
HEAD OF BEAUTY, *ELLE* ITALY



"I CAN FEEL MY SKIN BECOMING SOFTER AND MORE TONED WITH EVERY USE"

– GABRIELA CALITOIU



THE BEST BODY CARE

FIRMING

LANCŌME ABSOLUE SOFT BODY BALM, $371.

"A total luxury; it offers a proper self-pamper moment at the end of a long day. The thick, luxurious texture melts in your palms like soft cream, and blends easily."

YOUNJI JUNG
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* KOREA

"This balm brings facial anti-ageing luxury to the body. Featuring the exclusive perpetual rose and pro-xylane, it intensely nourishes and firms. It's pure sensory pleasure."

ARLETTE BARRIONUEVO
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *ELLE* ARGENTINA

"What I love most is how comforting it feels on the skin. It nourishes deeply, and I can actually feel my skin becoming softer and more toned with every use."

GABRIELA CALITOIU
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* ROMANIA

Max Mara
trench coat.

Courrèges jacket.

ELLE INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY AWARDS 2026

THE BEST MAKEUP

MASCARA

ARMANI BEAUTY VERTIGO LIFT MASCARA, $70.

"This is one of the few mascaras I can actually use on its own without a curler, and it truly lifts my lashes. The tube has a built-in wiper, which leaves just the right amount of product on the brush. I also appreciate that it doesn't smudge."

ZDENKA TOMIS
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* CZECH REPUBLIC

EYELINER

VICTORIA BECKHAM BEAUTY SATIN KAJAL LINER, $57.

"You can do both precise strokes or smudgy and smoky with this creamy liner; I adore that versatility."

ALIA HUSIN
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* INDONESIA

LIPSTICK

DIOR ROUGE DIOR ON STAGE LIPSTICK, $72.

"Wears like lipstick, feels like a balm and finishes like a lip gloss. Best of all: one application stays on firmly until my next meal."

JASMINE ALIMIN
DEPUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* SINGAPORE

FOUNDATION

HAUS LABS BY LADY GAGA TRICLONE SKIN TECH FOUNDATION, $85.

"With calming effects and serum-like consistency, this clever foundation looks like skin. Also, there is an extensive range of shades to suit every skin type."

SALLY HUNWICK
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* AUSTRALIA

SETTING SPRAY

CHARLOTTE TILBURY AIRBRUSH FLAWLESS SETTING SPRAY, $85.

"A setting spray that truly delivers. This lightweight mist locks in makeup for hours without settling into lines, while aloe vera and green tea soothe the skin. It leaves a fresh, radiant glow – never greasy, just perfectly polished."

BARBARA HUBER
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* GERMANY



"IT HAS STAYING POWER FOR A LUXURIOUS FEELING ALL DAY"

– CECILIE INGDAL



THE BEST NAIL CARE

OPI NATURE STRONG VEGAN LACQUER, $23.95.

"This lacquer gives me a glossy, salon-like finish while being kind to the planet, which makes it even more special in my routine."

FATIMA ABDIEVA
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* UZBEKISTAN

"Punchy, wear-resistant shades with up to 84 per cent bio-sourced ingredients – what's not to love?"

SALLY HUNWICK
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* AUSTRALIA

THE BEST FRAGRANCE

CHANEL CHANCE EAU SPLENDIDE EAU DE PARFUM SPRAY, 100ML, $295.

"An elegant new twist on the iconic fragrance with sophisticated and alluring notes, from crisp fruit at the top to a soft floral heart and warm base. It also has staying power for a luxurious feeling all day. It's a new favourite in my collection."

CECILIE INGDAL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *ELLE* DENMARK

ELLE INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY AWARDS 2026

THE BEST HAIRCARE

SHAMPOO

KĒRASTASE GLOSS ABSOLU BAIN HYDRA-GLAZE SHAMPOO, $62.

"There's shine, and then there's the out-of-this-world glass-like lustre this product delivers. My strands look like they came out of a shampoo commercial when I use this."

KATHERINE LALANCETTE
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* CANADA

"This shampoo does what is normally achieved with multiple products: beautifully bouncy and soft hair. It cleanses exceptionally well, and you don't have to worry about flat hair."

ZDENKA TOMIS
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* CZECH REPUBLIC

HAIRCARE

AVEDA MIRACULOUS OIL, $64.

"A true thirst quencher for dry ends – just a few drops brings dull strands back to life with healthy shine."

LAURE VANDENDAELE
BEAUTY DIRECTOR, *ELLE* BELGIUM

HAIR STYLING

DYSON AIRWRAP CO-ANDA 2X MULTI-STYLER AND DRYER, $999.

"It gives me the freedom to try different looks with the new smart attachments, which adapt to your hair type – all without worrying about harming my hair, which stays soft and healthy even with frequent styling."

GABRIELA CALITOIU
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* ROMANIA



"MY STRANDS LOOK LIKE THEY CAME OUT OF A SHAMPOO COMMERCIAL WHEN I USE THIS"

– KATHERINE LALANCETTE

THE BEST GREEN CARE

SKINCARE

MELVITA NECTARCALM SOOTHING MOISTURIZING FLUID, $49.68.

"It embodies the new face of clean beauty: respectful, effective and sensorial. NectarCalm soothes the skin while restoring its balance, proving that nature and science can truly work in harmony."

FREDERIQUE KRAGBE LEININGER
CEO & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *ELLE* IVORY COAST

MAKEUP

RMS BEAUTY REVITALIZE HYDRA CONCEALER, $60.

"Finding a concealer that ticks all the boxes isn't easy, but this favourite does exactly that! It offers high coverage without feeling too heavy and effortlessly covers blemishes, redness and even dark circles. The hydrating formula also means it doesn't cling to dry patches or settle into fine lines."

VERONICA HENRIKSSON
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* SWEDEN

HAIRCARE

RAHUA SCALP & SKIN TONER, $59.

"Soothing an irritated scalp is not that easy. This one is gentle yet effective. It cleanses, balances and refreshes – like skincare for your hair!"

ROZINA KOURI
SENIOR BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* GREECE

"This is perfect for those who seek a product that will restore and refresh the condition of their scalp. It helps strengthen your scalp, with natural ingredients, to reduce excessive oil, irritation and inflammation."

CHAYANON CHONGPRASERT
BEAUTY EDITOR, *ELLE* THAILAND

HAIR BY MARTYN FOSS CALDER AT AIRPORT AGENCY; MAKEUP BY MARIA OLSSON AT WISE & TALENT AGENCY; MANICURE BY TREACY PATNELLI AT AIRPORT AGENCY. MODEL: KATHARINA MAYR AT ELITE PARIS. GETTY IMAGES

Ludovic de
Saint Sernin top;
Dinh Van ring.



Always read the label

VACCINES? WHO NEEDS THEM. RAW MILK? DRINK UP. THE WELLNESS SPACE IS BEING CO-OPTED BY CONSPIRACY THEORISTS AND THE RIGHT WING. SHANNON MAHANTY INVESTIGATES THE RISE OF MISINFORMATION FOR THE WORRIED WELL

In the rolling British countryside, like-minded festival-goers gather for four days in search of a good time. By day, they eat organic food, go to breathwork classes and attend talks by notoriously contrarian speakers. By night, they watch guitar bands, dance to live DJ sets and sit around campfires until the early hours. But Glastonbury this is not. Sounds Beautiful Festival in Dorset is an event for the so-called 'freedom movement' — a loose coalition of natural-health advocates and conspiracy theorists. Amid the singing and the cider are influencers promoting questionable diets, a whole host of vaccine conspiracies — and definitely no 5G.

Ever since the COVID pandemic, when the world became more isolated, more anxious and more online, wellness and conspiracy cultures have been dramatically colliding. What often starts as an innocuous desire to enhance mental and physical wellbeing can lead to a rabbit hole of misinformation, especially online, as social media users are funnelled by algorithms and served increasingly extreme content, from drinking your own wee as a cure for COVID to treating cancer with coffee enemas. Increasingly, there is a political edge; extreme wellness ideas are being co-opted by right-wing movements who frame these choices as acts of resistance against government control and a 'woke' culture that advocates for evidence-based healthcare. Lee Tilghman is a former wellness influencer who recently published her memoir, *If You Don't Like This, I Will Die*, detailing the tolls of internet culture. What started as posting shots of smoothie bowls and herself wearing athleisure quickly became something darker. "I realised I had unlocked an entire content strategy," she writes in the book. "The more personal, the better. The more extreme, the better. I started going hard on 'I quit' posts: why I quit coffee, why I quit caffeine, why I quit sugar. These posts performed so well, and the algorithm seemed to favour them. My account was featured a few times on the app's Explore page, which seriously boosted my follower count."

Tilghman wasn't just posting spurious content, but consuming it, too. She writes about eating nothing except bananas for two days, after seeing claims online of the diet's 'detoxing' impact, and applying menstrual blood to her face (#periodbloodfacemask has more than seven million views on TikTok). In 2019, she took a hiatus from Instagram, recognising that she had developed orthorexia — a proposed eating disorder characterised by an excessive preoccupation with only consuming foods deemed 'pure' or 'healthy'. "What drew me to wellness was the promise that I could find nirvana, perfection and control if I just stuck with it and went deeper," she says. "The darkness came when I realised this was an empty promise." A few months later she returned to social media as a critic of online wellness culture, warning other women against getting drawn in. "Finding my own definition of health, wellness and

WELLNESS IDEAS, TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, CAN ADOPT A MORE DANGEROUS FORM

self-care, away from my audience, away from the opinions of others, away from the spotlight, grounded me in the place I am today — much more nuanced and not so extreme."

According to a report in *The Medical Journal of Australia*, people are drawn to conspiracy theories in an attempt to satisfy three needs: an epistemic need to understand the world and increase certainty, an existential need to have a safe environment and a social need to maintain relationships and a positive self-image. The Australian Psychological Society also cites narcissism as a contributing factor.

"By aligning themselves with what is 'natural' and 'pure', untainted by greed and corruption, alternative-health influencers who promote

"WOMEN'S CONSPIRACY THEORIES ARE OFTEN BASED AROUND HEALTH"
– SEBASTIAN SHEMIRANI

conspiracy theories and misinformation are able to position themselves as more enlightened than the general public," agrees Dr Stephanie Alice Baker, an author and academic who studies the spread of false information. "[They are] therefore able to help their followers to 'see the light' as they embark on a personal journey of self-actualisation and spiritual awakening."

Take the recent controversy around raw milk. Despite there being little-to-no scientific evidence of its purported health benefits (including better digestion and boosting your immune system), public figures such as Gwyneth Paltrow and US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr have touted unpasteurised milk (that hasn't been heat-treated to prevent disease) as a kind of superfood. In reality, drinking raw milk increases a person's chance of catching serious infections; the NSW Food Authority warns: "People who consume raw milk are at an increased risk of severe illness and potentially death." A US study found that unpasteurised dairy products cause 840 times more illnesses than those that are heat-treated. The tradwife influencer Hannah Neeleman (@ballerinafarm), who bottles and sells raw milk out of her Utah dairy, recently paused sales after testing found high levels of coliform (the family of bacteria that includes *E. coli*). (For her part, Neeleman claims it was a "business decision" to stop selling raw milk in August, rather than a response to two failed health tests.)

Still, the myth persists, with the top 500 #RawMilk TikToks amassing more than 231 million views. In the US, raw milk consumption continues to climb, with data from NielsenIQ showing sales increased by up to 65 per cent in 2024. In the UK, milk misinformation is also running rife. Recently, Arla Foods trialled Bovaer, a synthetic compound that inhibits methane production in dairy cows and could potentially reduce methane emissions by 30 per cent, which would have huge implications for the climate crisis. But champions of raw milk were quick to react with unsubstantiated claims that the additives caused infertility and that shadowy elites were using it to control the population. Videos spread on social media of users pouring milk down the toilet in protest.

When it comes to health concerns, many of us turn to the internet to seek advice or find community, but dangerous health and wellness content proliferates in digital spaces that aren't properly regulated. In 2024, Netflix's *Apple Cider Vinegar* followed the true story of wellness influencer Belle Gibson, who faked a brain tumour and told her followers she cured it through nutrition and alternative therapies. She gained 200,000 followers in a year, launched an app and landed a recipe-book deal before a whistleblower and an investigative journalist ultimately exposed her as a fraud.

Perfidious influencers such as Gibson and yoga teachers-turned-cult leaders Guru Jagat and Bikram Choudhury (the subject of HBO and Netflix documentaries, respectively) largely target women by exploiting insecurities about health — from weight loss to fertility issues and menopause — to promote products under the guise of empowerment. "For decades, women's health has been under-researched, under-funded and under-diagnosed," women's health advocate Dr Tosin Sotubo-Ajayi says. "The online world has given women a voice to share their experiences and speak out. People often feel let down by traditional healthcare, and this may be pushing them to seek advice elsewhere — such as online spaces where misinformation thrives."

"I do see things online — women talking about whether or not to eat their placenta, or only eating raw foods — but I choose to actively avoid that kind of content," says Delia Baker, a London-based yoga teacher and acupuncturist. In being discerning about the accounts she follows, Baker notes her algorithm hasn't funnelled into conspiracyland, but she recognises how wellness ideas taken out of context can adopt a more dangerous form. "Our attention spans are short on social media. For example, ideas from Chinese medicine about eating less in the evening make a lot of sense when you talk it out, but if you see a snapshot online about intermittent fasting, it ignores the fact that it can impact women's hormones and reproductive health differently to men."

The wellness-to-conspiracy-theorist pipeline is often associated with the post-truth era of US politics. Billionaire CEOs such as Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk have created a digital climate where conspiracy theories can thrive by removing fact-checkers from social-media platforms for their own political gain. Reform UK is tapping into the same playbook, appealing to a disenfranchised audience by amplifying conspiracy theories. Several candidates have shared misinformation online, from anti-vaccine content to claims that the climate crisis is a hoax. Closer to home, the ABC reported that three One Nation candidates in the 2024 Queensland election posted conspiracy theories to social media.

In 2021, a UK nurse was struck off for posting anti-vaccine content. Kate Shemirani (one of Sounds Beautiful Festival's headline acts) bills herself as a 'Natural Nurse in a Toxic World' and played a key role in organising anti-lockdown protests during the pandemic. She's compared medical staff to Nazi war criminals and charges almost $400 for 'natural health' consultations and personalised programs. Last year, her daughter Paloma Shemirani died aged 23 after refusing chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin lymphoma, which doctors believed she had an 80 per cent chance of surviving if treated.

"It's almost a year since my sister died — I don't think I've had a single night's sleep where I haven't had nightmares about what I could have done differently," says Sebastian Shemirani, who, alongside his brother Gabriel, has been campaigning to combat health misinformation by calling for tightened government policies and a stricter financial regulation of the wellness market. Sebastian says his mother's world view has always been shaped by paranoia and, as teenagers, he and his brother started to question her behaviour and break away from the same ideologies. "She's always been highly narcissistic and contrarian — conspiracy theories are a manifestation of her existing personality traits." Last year, Kate told an inquest into her daughter's death that paramedics were to blame, denying accusations that she influenced Paloma's decision to refuse chemo.

For Sebastian, the issue isn't only legal, it's gendered — conspiracy theories target our insecurities. Misogynistic influencers such as Andrew Tate and Jordan Peterson prey on men's feelings of vulnerability and loss of status. "Women's conspiracy theories are often based around health," he says. "These people will connect ideas together when it's profitable for them to shift you over. It's everything on the pipeline of useless to harmful — from yoga mats and dodgy supplements to, ultimately, anti-vaccine and anti-medicine ideology, which is what happened to my sister."

Despite the danger of conspiracy theories, governments across the world have struggled to combat online misinformation. In Australia, the Online Safety Act focuses on protecting people from illegal or harmful online content or behaviour. In 2024, the government axed its controversial misinformation bill, which sought to combat harmful content on digital platforms, after concerns were raised about freedom of speech.

"We need to create non-judgemental, safe spaces where curiosity is welcomed, but gently guided by credible information," Sotubo-Ajayi says. "We have a real responsibility to listen to people's needs and address them with evidence-based information. Wellness has to stop being marketed as a luxury and start being reframed as a basic right."

GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATIONS BY AI



"WE NEED TO CREATE SAFE SPACES WHERE CURIOSITY IS WELCOMED, BUT GENTLY GUIDED BY CREDIBLE INFORMATION"

– DR TOSIN SOTUBO-AJAYI

The latest status symbol?

A SLEEP IN

IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO BE OPTIMISING WHILE YOU'RE AWAKE; WELLNESS HAS INFILTRATED THE LAND OF THE DREAMING, TOO

WORDS BY DIVYA VENKATARAMAN



Sophia Loren catches up on some shut-eye on set in 1957.

Reader, a confession: I am a woman who loves to sleep. I am not a 5am meditator, or a pre-work workout-er. I am not an early bird; you can keep your proverbial worms. It's just not pleasant to be up before the sun. But I do see the appeal, in that I once went to a Pilates class at 6.30am and talked about nothing else for a week.

I have not always embraced my later-rising ways. In fact, the culture, if I may outsource my insecurities to something so conveniently abstract, convinced me that being a useful, upright member of society meant being up at dawn. So I raged against my innate sensibilities, with varying degrees of success. But now it feels like, finally, my kind are rising up. Typically, later than would be ideal.

I recently witnessed two besuited, beheeled women pore over each other's sleep data in a cafe. The numbers were truly decadent. "9." "8." "8.5." "9.5. Oh, that was a good one." One credited her night-time cocktail. "Applying lavender oil, half an hour before bed, and taking a gummy." The other wagged her finger, an Oura ring flat and shining below the knuckle. As I picked up my croissant, I left with a question: when did sleep get so … chic?

It's not just confined to my coffee queue. A year ago, cosmetics giant Estée Lauder appointed a global sleep science adviser to navigate the new interest in the area. Where celebrities once used to pride themselves on getting four hours a night, they're now touting the benefits of slumber: Gwyneth Paltrow aims for 10 hours, while Dakota Johnson says she ideally sleeps for 14. Books on rest have also taken off, from Matthew Walker's *Why We Sleep*, to Merijn van de Laar's *How to Sleep Like a Caveman*, to Antonio Zadra and Robert Stickgold's *When Brains Dream*. It's even reached classical music circles: Max Richter recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of



his *Sleep* project with an overnight performance at London's Alexandra Palace, complete with fully made beds from which his audience could experience a slumberous show.

"Sleep has become the new status symbol," says Jennifer Palmer, Estée Lauder's senior vice president of global innovation development and science leadership. "Even gen Z is prioritising sleep, and choosing early nights in versus late nights out. Tracking sleep quality has become something of a competitive sport."

"There is a shift in embracing sleep as the restorative act it is, and not something you can 'cheat', like in past years," agrees Rukaiya Daud, co-founder of the bedding label Sutram, which makes high-thread-count organic cotton sheets in art-forward colourways.

It shouldn't really be controversial — sleep is unequivocally a good thing. It supports the immune system, allows cells to regenerate, regulates metabolism and allows our brains to function through the day. But culturally, it's taken us a while to get here.

"Sleep is now seen as essential, not optional, and that's a big change from the hustle culture of the past," says Dr Jason Wersland, Therabody's founder and chief wellness officer. The brand, originally known for its percussive-therapy massage guns, has moved into sleep technology. Its high-tech SleepMask combines traditional blackout design with "gentle vibrations to calm the nervous system and improve sleep quality," Wersland says. The brand saw how its already wellness-literate customers were thinking more about sleep as a part of their wellbeing. "The pandemic accelerated this shift, with more people realising the importance of recovery and mental health," he says.

Sleep has long been a physical problem to fix, but in our modern times, solutions range from the wild and wonderful to the positively weird. There are pillows designed for napping (not sleeping — just napping), mattresses advertised to bring you to a "broader spectrum of consciousness" and $10,000-per-night luxury sleep retreats (which makes a satin eye mask for $1000 seem, actually, pretty reasonable).

Meanwhile, Mecca recently launched a 'sleep' section to meet customer demand. "A decade ago, [a lack of] sleep was almost worn as a badge of honour — being busy was glamorised," says Marita Burke, who heads up the futures side of Mecca. "Now, it's the opposite. Sleep has become a sign of balance and living well." Brands like Anatome, The Nue Co, Bamford and The Gut Cø are leading the charge, spruiking products like pillow sprays, sleep oils and fragrances that promote better rest.

> "SLEEP IS NOW SEEN AS ESSENTIAL ... AND THAT'S A BIG CHANGE FROM THE HUSTLE CULTURE OF THE PAST"
>
> **– DR JASON WERSLAND**

Mecca's in-house brand Kit has also gotten in on the action, launching a pillow mist, relaxation body balm and sleep powder. The response, says Burke, was "incredible". "There's a clear cultural shift towards valuing rest as a form of wellbeing."

But is there a possibility that we're overcorrecting, as we, as a society, tend to do? Are we becoming a little too obsessed with sleep? We spent decades treating sleep as something to be solved; now it's a lifestyle signifier, complete with metrics, branded products and a stink of moral superiority. In doing so, we may have made sleep stressful again. Take 'sleepmaxxing', the strange phenomenon in which people turn to interventions from mouth tape to nostril expanders in an effort to enter deeper sleep states. While some of these social media-megaphoned tricks overlap with established sleep hygiene guidance, others carry little scientific backing — and some sleep experts caution that the very pursuit of 'perfect sleep' may actually backfire. Orthosomnia is a very real condition in which people become so fixated on the quality and quantity of their sleep that the obsession begins to harm their mood, their days and their health. Early research found that some users would stay in bed longer just to boost their tracker numbers, ironically making actual sleep worse.



I ask if it's something Daud has considered when she designs for Sutram — the brand's messaging has always been about finding the idiosyncrasy and play in bedtime. Could we have become over-ambitious about sleep? "Now that you say that, yes," Daud muses. "As much as we aspire to have our lives in order, to sleep well and do everything right, life can get busy and messy." Sleep is, of course, important — "but sometimes, it might be laughing with friends, or a dance, or a really late night that keeps you young at the end of the day". Delightful. Now, time for a nap?

1 Sutram standard pillowcases, $95 for set **2** The Gut Cø Sleep Well, $67 **3** Hommey sleep shirt and shorts, $89 each **4** Vanessa Megan Nocturne Magnesium & Lavender Night-Time Body Cream, $89.95.

GETTY IMAGES

DESCRIPTION A gel with 83% oil for very dry skin. INDICATION Significantly increases skin moisturisation. PRESENTATION Orange / pink gel. FORMULATION Gel with 83% occlusive ingredients, 14% humectants and 3% water. INGREDIENTS Paraffinum Liquidum, Triisononanoin, Isopropyl Palmitate, Glycerin, Isopropyl Myristate, Aqua, Caprylic/Capric Triglyceride, Cetearyl Ethylhexanoate, Isostearyl Isostearate, C26-28 Alkyl Dimethicone, Butyrospermum Parkii Butter, Sodium Lactate, Urea, Gluconolactone, Sodium PCA, Sodium Hyaluronate, Octyldodecyl PCA, Sucrose Laurate, Sucrose Stearate, Lactic Acid, Lanolin, Butylene Glycol, Dimethicone/Vinyl Dimethicone Crosspolymer, Bisabolol, Helianthus Annuus Seed Oil, Silica, Glycine Soja Oil, Retinyl Palmitate, Tocopheryl Acetate, Niacinamide, Linoleic Acid, Linolenic Acid, Tocopherol, Anthemis Nobilis Flower Oil, Calendula Officinalis Extract, Rosmarinus Officinalis Leaf Oil, Lavandula Angustifolia Oil, Parfum, Farnesol, Limonene, Linalool, CI 17200. DRY SKIN CLINICAL TRIAL Trial centre: Complife Italia S.r.l, Italy. Objective: A clinical evaluation to test the efficacy of Bio-Oil® Dry Skin Gel in improving skin moisturisation. Sample: Subjects: 40 healthy females with Fitzpatrick skin types II-V and clinically showing dry / very dry skin (grade II-IV) at the level of the outer lower legs, and Corneometer values of less than 40 at enrolment. Test site: test product applied to one entire lower leg of all subjects. Age of participants: 40–65. Methodology: Split-body, evaluator-blinded, randomised and controlled clinical-instrumental study. Subjects participated in an initial screening evaluation followed by a 7-day dry down
period (regression). During the dry down period, and throu
Bio-Oil® Dry Skin Gel was then applied twice da
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tolerability of Bio-Oil® Dr
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under the supervision of
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Bio-Oil® Dry Skin Gel wa
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ELLE

lifestyle

Paris, France.

FRENCH OPEN

Paris Fashion Week may be coming to a close, but there's plenty to love in the city year-round; your guide to starting an art collection; and how to host a post-summer dinner party (hint: less rowdy, more intimate).

JORDAN PLIHAL / UNSPLASH

DEAR ANNALISA

ARTIST, FURNITURE DESIGNER AND HOST EXTRAORDINAIRE ANNALISA FERRARIS HAS ALL YOUR ENTERTAINING QUESTIONS SORTED



DEAR ANNALISA,
Summer's over but I don't want the good vibes to end. How do we keep the gatherings going and the vibes high as the weather cools?

I find the dawning of each season exciting. It brings with it a much-needed change, a different pace, a new feeling in the air. Autumn — the season of shedding — is especially welcome after a hot, lively summer filled with activity, parties and probably a little too much champagne. It is also my favourite time to host.

Autumn allows you to shed unnecessary extras, pare back the guest list and pay closer attention to the details. I also love using the season as an excuse to entertain in the lesser-used areas of the house. The other evening, my husband was making us an aperitif and I thought, *Why not sit in our narrow courtyard and pretend we're in Paris?* Usually a purely functional space for light and cross-flow, we rarely linger there. But that night, I seized the moment. As he took to the bar, shaking and straining cocktails, I set up a pair of director's chairs, a tiny bistro table, a vintage tablecloth and a single candlestick. We nestled into the corner of the courtyard, looking back towards the garden, marvelling at a perspective of the house we'd never noticed before.

In many ways, this is autumn's great metaphor. With space and reflection, we begin to see things differently. Perhaps some relationships exist only for summer, reaching their natural conclusion as the leaves begin to turn. Or perhaps it's you who has changed. Either way, seasons shift, relationships evolve and it's usually best to move with the change rather than against it.

As Carrie Bradshaw observed: "Seasons change; so do cities. People come into your life and people go. But it's comforting to know that the ones you love are always in your heart."

So let's dig in. Say you're hosting an intimate dinner with those you love; something that's small, cosy and offers the chance to truly show your hosting skills. Let's bring back the art of the table.



INGREDIENTS
60ml blended scotch
22ml fresh lemon juice
2 1/4 tsps rich honey syrup (below)
2 1/4 tsps sweetened ginger juice (below)
1 1/2 tsps peated single-malt scotch (to float)
Rosemary, to garnish

Rich honey syrup
180ml of honey to 60ml boiling water

Sweetened ginger juice
120ml fresh ginger juice
2 tbsps superfine (caster) sugar

METHOD
1. To make the syrup, stir ingredients until well combined. (When refrigerated, the syrup will keep for three months.)
2. To make the juice, combine the ingredients, then stir to dissolve.
3. To make the drink, combine the first four ingredients in a cocktail shaker filled with ice and shake vigorously for 15-20 seconds, or until frosted on the outside. Strain into a rocks glass filled with fresh ice. Pour the peated scotch over the top. Garnish with a piece of rosemary on a cocktail pick.

Napkins: It's time for the napkin fold to make its return. The care and intention it signals are unmatched. You can find easy instructions online, and the result adds not only a sculptural element to the table but also a quiet generosity your guests won't forget.
Menu: I sketch out how everything will be plated before I begin cooking, ensuring the dishes work together both visually and culinarily. I began doing this for larger events and I noticed guests would often photograph my hand-drawn menus. It showed care. They felt it. Now it's a staple of my smaller dinner parties, too.
Crockery: I love mixing materials. I was recently gifted the Monumental dinner set from Le Après, which I pair with stainless-steel bread plates, folded napkins, generous glassware and a candelabra for soft light.
Cocooning: Recently, I was invited to a friend's apartment for a casual dinner, and they opted for the coffee table instead of a formal setting. It was cosy, relaxed and intimate. Remember, autumn is about nourishment. Light the expensive candle. Roast a whole chicken with dates, leeks, olive oil and lemon juice. Invite the people you love to a small, intimate dinner. Nestle in. Enjoy the slower pace.





COURTESY OF ANNALISA FERRARIS

Quick bites

Sometimes I love the chaos of hosting, and sometimes I want absolute control. How do you balance spontaneity and planning without losing your mind?

Oh, I feel you. I think the secret to getting the best of both worlds lies in pantry confidence. The other day I hosted a last-minute lunch for friends and, while it's 2026 and you can have almost anything delivered at the drop of a hat, what's even better is knowing you're already prepared. Legumes, tinned fish, nuts and frozen bread are my quiet heroes – they take the edge off hosting and allow for spontaneity without stress. Is the menu feeling a little light? Throw a frozen sourdough into the oven, whip some butter, lay out a tin of anchovies and, suddenly, it all feels intentional. Easy, generous, done.

What's your rule for leftovers at a dinner party? Do you offer them to guests, save them for yourself or pretend they never existed?

Provided the evening has been a success, I'll almost always package up leftovers and send them home with guests. It feels thoughtful and generous – like a grown-up party bag. I even have a bespoke stamp with a crest I designed for my husband, Nathan, and I that I use to seal the parcels. A small, final gesture – parting gifts for the walk home.

What's the best way to introduce a new group of friends together?

Drinks in the garden, or a park in the afternoon – that way, no-one is locked into a full three-course dinner. It's relaxed, fluid and allows for easy mingling. Wine, conversation, standing food. Comfortable, not rigid. What I wouldn't recommend? A weekend away with two newly merged friend groups, lots of alcohol and late nights. I've been to one of those and let's just say there was a great deal of autumnal shedding by the end.

So, you want to be an art collector

A GUIDE TO CURATING A COLLECTION YOU'LL LOVE

WORDS BY MICHELLE WANG
ARTWORK BY MARK TENNANT

The high-stakes swish of an auction paddle and the swanky lifestyle typically associated with buying and owning art is quietly dying. A new generation of collectors is proving that the once-impenetrable world of culture and capital is no longer reserved for the elite. In fact, in 2025, 74 per cent of art collectors were gen Z or millennial, according to The Art Basel & UBS Survey of Global Collecting. And across the board, women are outspending men.

Collecting art is no longer about excess or exclusivity, but a choice that consciously reflects your lifestyle and values by directing money towards creativity, culture and the people who produce it. Buying art is one of the most direct ways to support artists and the production of culture. It fosters local creative ecosystems, deepens your understanding of making and craftsmanship, and connects you to stories and perspectives beyond your own. It is a conscientious personal and financial investment, one that accrues meaning over time through the memories and milestones it marks.

Curating a collection involves a series of enriching experiences: conversations with artists, unexpected encounters, new ways of seeing. It is a mutual relationship: private collectors can give artists greater agency over how their work is displayed and cared for, preserving the intention and life that the artist has imbued it with.

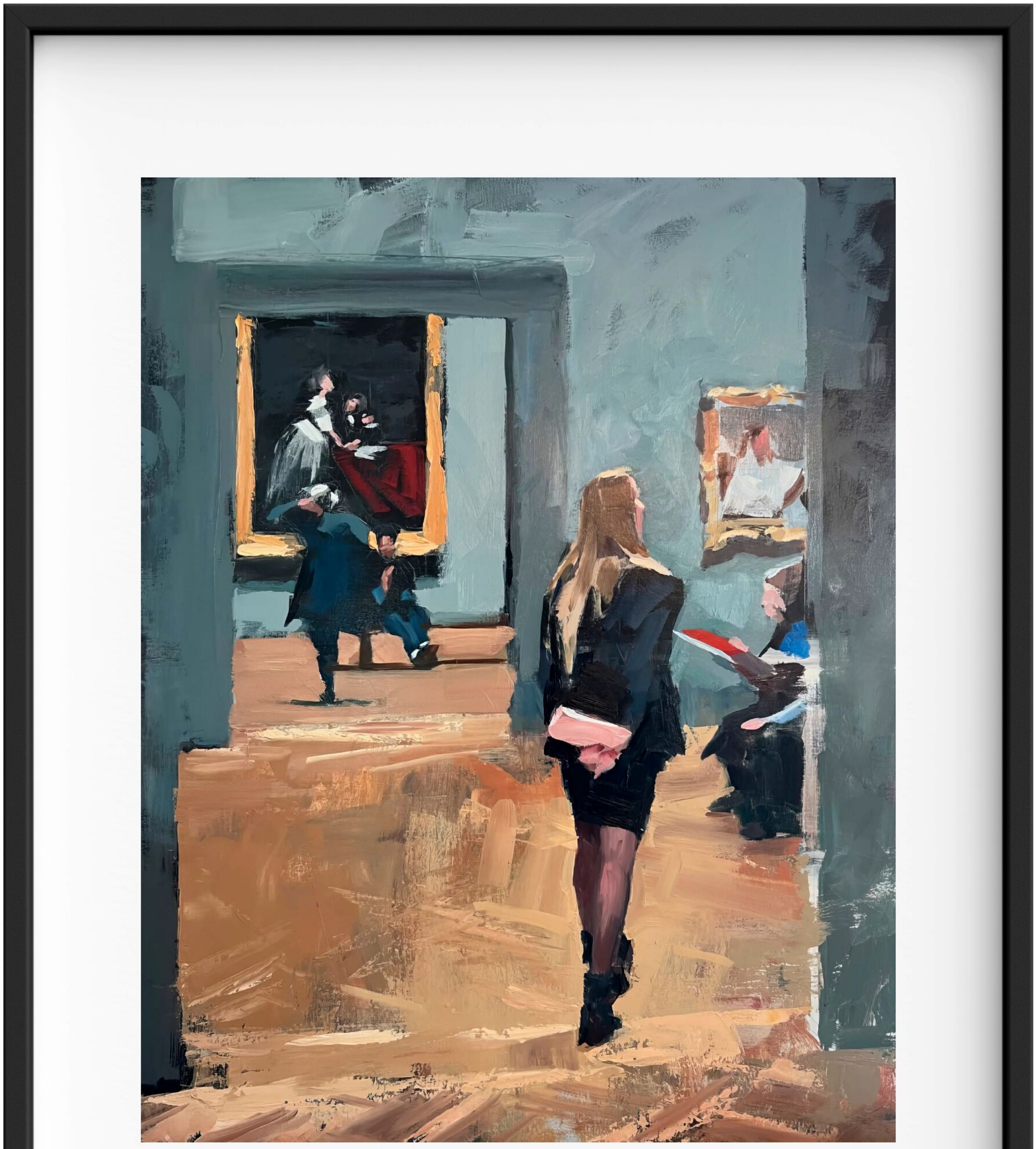
Art collecting sharpens how we value objects more broadly. Immersing yourself in creative practice encourages slower, more considered consumption — an increasingly radical act. And yes, in literal terms, art is an asset. But its most compelling ROI is personal and cultural: a return on intention.

[ART'S] MOST COMPELLING ROI IS A RETURN ON INTENTION

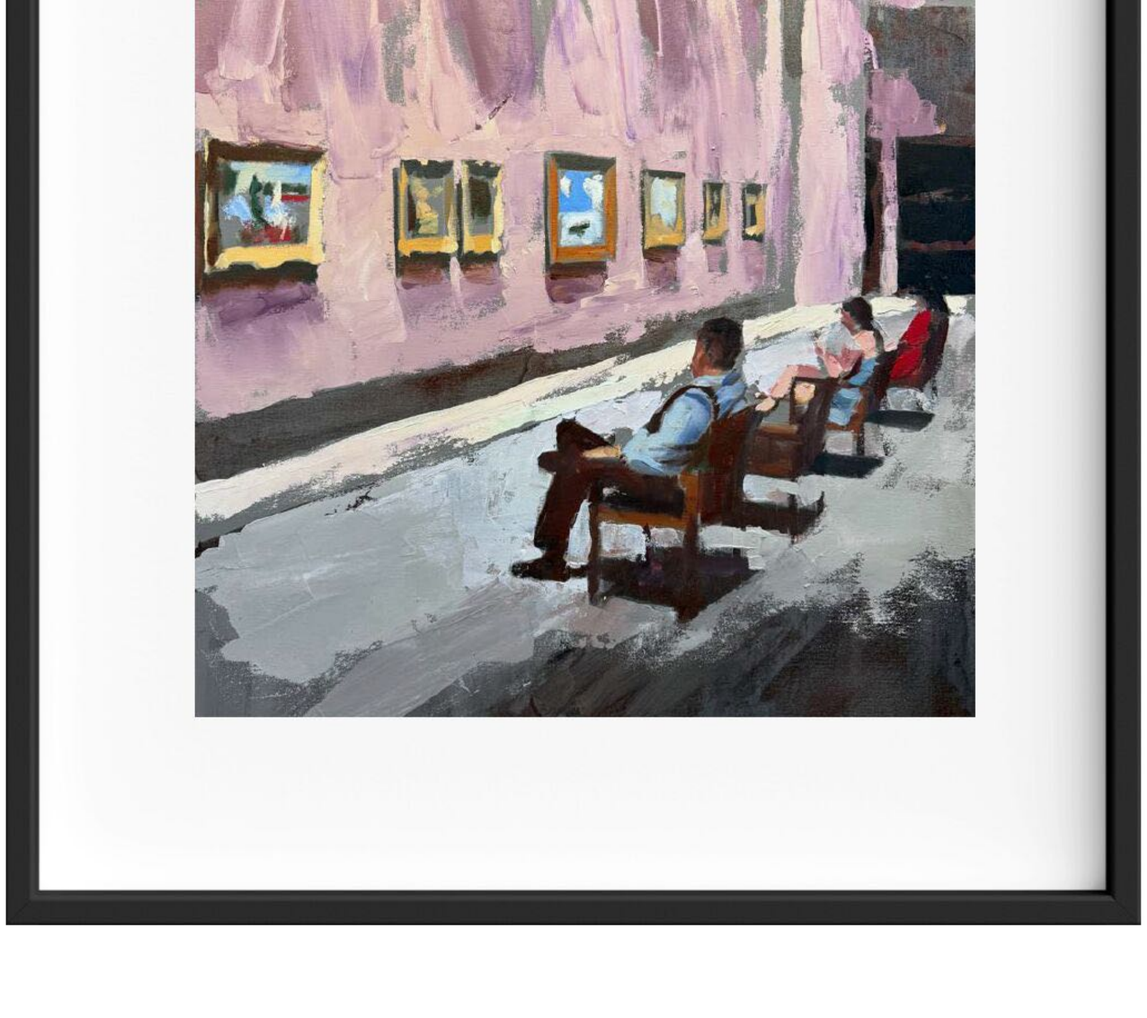
On the global stage, Australian art is going from strength to strength with the success of Archie Moore at the 2024 Venice Biennale and Khaled Sabsabi's upcoming presentation, as well as the mesmerising works of Emily Kam Kngwarray displayed at Tate Modern. This is a singular moment to collect Australian artists at every stage of their careers — and to help ensure this momentum continues.

But behind the growing visibility of Australian art, the industry remains precarious. Many artists continue to balance their practice with multiple jobs, making each purchase — especially at an early stage — genuinely consequential. A 2025 report by RMIT University and the University of Melbourne found that the average annual income from visual arts practice in Australia is just $13,937, with only 25 per cent of artists able to work full-time in their practice. In this sense, collecting art is not just about ownership, but about sustaining the cultural ecosystems we value.

Whether you consume your art regularly in galleries or fleetingly on social media, consider this your guide to your most intentional (and chicest) purchase yet.



Museum David, 2023

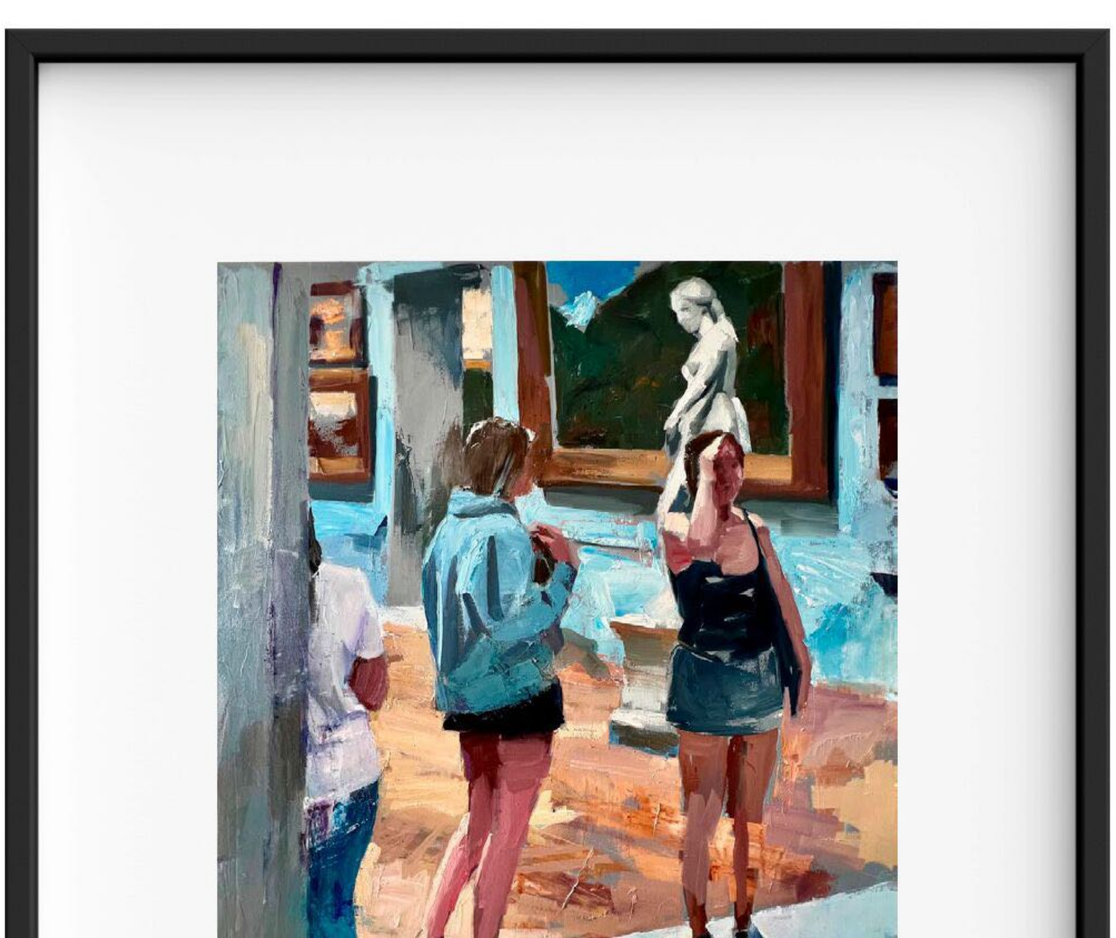


Pink museum, 2025

DEVELOP YOUR TASTE

"Exposure is the simple answer," art consultant Ivy Rose Ritchens says. The key is to view as much art as possible, ideally in person but also online through social media and artist or gallery websites. Art exists in far more places than we often realise: public works in train stations and parks, large museums, commercial galleries and artist-run spaces. Embracing the variety will improve your understanding of what art can be. Always document what you see. Save works you're drawn to into Instagram and Pinterest folders. Start noticing patterns in your taste, whether it's colour, material, scale, themes or texture. Over time, these instincts sharpen.

It can also be helpful to follow art accounts like ArtDrunk and Artsy or explore apps such as ArtRabbit and Artwrld while travelling to discover exhibitions and events nearby. Art adviser and advocate Kym Elphinstone suggests joining collector groups that offer access to private collections – an invaluable way to see beyond the gallery and discover new art. And if you can't make it in person, books, magazines and other platforms often document private collections, such as Elphinstone's own book, *Collecting: Living with Art*, and Substack, which show how people build meaningful relationships with art over time.



Museum American, 2024

BECOME A SAVVY BUYER

You can buy art on any budget – truly. While record-breaking auction sales dominate headlines, they represent only a tiny fraction of the market. Collecting often begins in small, deeply personal ways. Artist and curator Gillian Kayrooz purchased her first artwork at 14 with her own pocket money, directly from British artist Noel Fielding via email. That exchange led to a small print edition made especially for her. Stories like this highlight how following curiosity can lead to meaningful acquisitions.

Art school graduate shows, artist studio spaces, community-led programs and fundraising auctions are often some of the most exciting places to uncover new artists. Supporting artists early in their careers is often more financially accessible, and can play a formative role in the direction of their practice. Unshaped by market expectations or institutional validation, early works can reveal the conceptual concerns, visual language and questions that continue to echo throughout an artist's career. Curator Hans Ulrich Obrist notes, "If you take the first work of a visual artist, it already includes almost everything they do later."

If you can, consider sharing or swapping artworks with friends and family. Common among artists, this practice champions each other's work while creating moments for gathering, conversation and community – and allows you to experiment with your taste and experience how art lives across different spaces.

Don't hesitate to reach out directly to artists. Ask about their practice, what works they have available or even whether they take commissions. Auction houses such as Lawsons or Shapiro, which are also online, and newer platforms like Project 02, which curates emerging Australian artists and designers and holds occasional pop-ups, can be rewarding places to browse with an open mind.

Start noticing patterns in your taste, whether it's colour, material, scale, themes or texture

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Museum 19, 2024

WHEN TO SEAL THE DEAL

How do you know if it's the one? Simply, it's the work you can't stop thinking about. Go with your gut – and don't wait for an institution, auction house or algorithm to tell you what's worth caring about. "Be bold, trust your instincts and buy what you love," Elphinstone advises.

At the same time, do your research. Kayrooz encourages collectors to approach purchases with the same care they would any major decision: learn about the artist, start conversations and stay curious. The art world may appear intimidating, but artists themselves are often generous and eager to share their work.

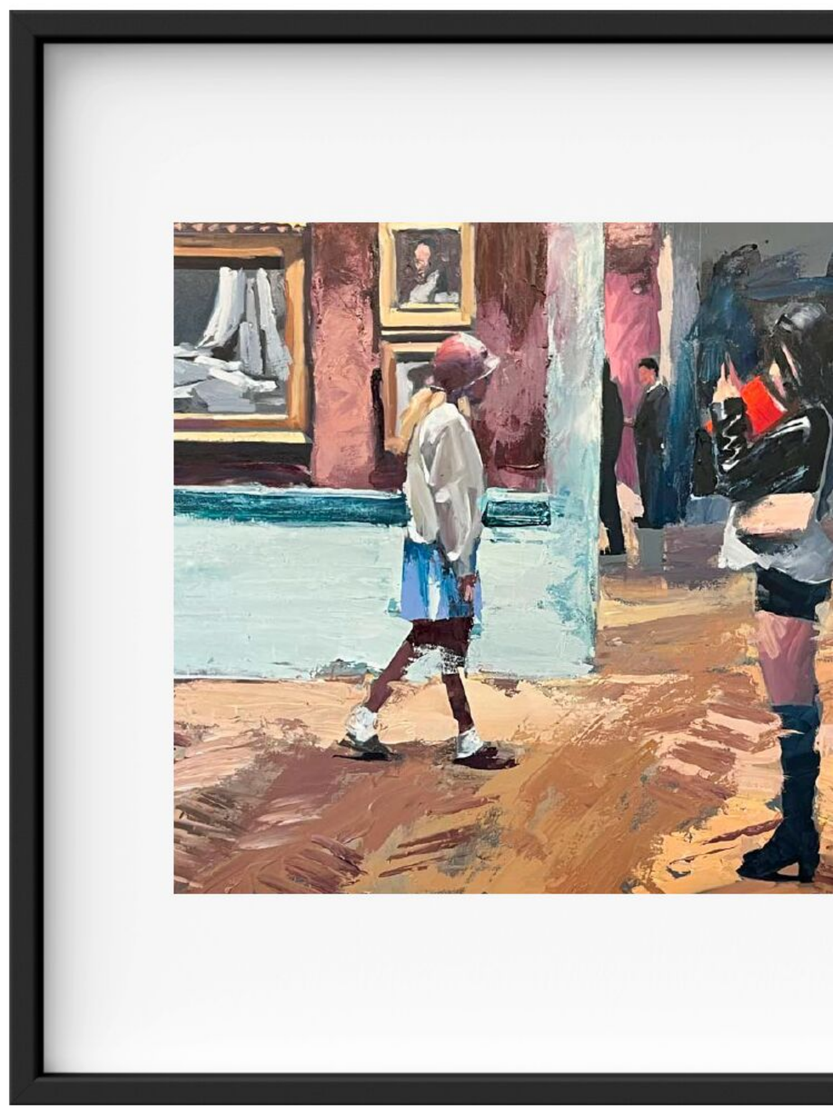
Go with your gut — and don't wait for an institution, auction house or algorithm to tell you what's worth caring about

DOs

- Choose works that challenge or unsettle you – they tend to sustain your interest over the long term (and might start more unexpected conversations).
- Take time to do your own research and follow your curiosity.
- Reach out to advisers and gallerists for expertise and guidance, not to arbitrate your taste.
- Start conversations with artists whenever possible.
- Buy with intention, enjoy the thrill, and repeat.
- Share the love: tell your friends about the artist behind the artwork, join an institutional or informal supporter group, and consider sharing and swapping artworks.

DON'Ts

- Resist the urge to have your taste validated by someone else's collection or social media.
- Forget chasing trends – trend-driven purchases rarely offer longer-term satisfaction.
- Don't overthink how your artwork purchase will fit into your home or an imagined future collection. Ritchens suggests acquiring pieces with personality rather than striving for an overly curated aesthetic. Especially when working with smaller budgets or works on paper, embracing eclectic combinations or salon hangs can create dynamic conversations between works. As Iris Apfel famously put it: "More is more and less is a bore."



Odalisque, 2024

GETTY IMAGES



AT HOME WITH DANIELLE McEWAN

THE FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF TIGMI HAS CREATED A SANCTUARY IN THE BYRON BAY HINTERLAND WHERE ART, DESIGN AND FAMILY UNITE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALICIA TAYLOR **WORDS BY** ELIZA O'HARE



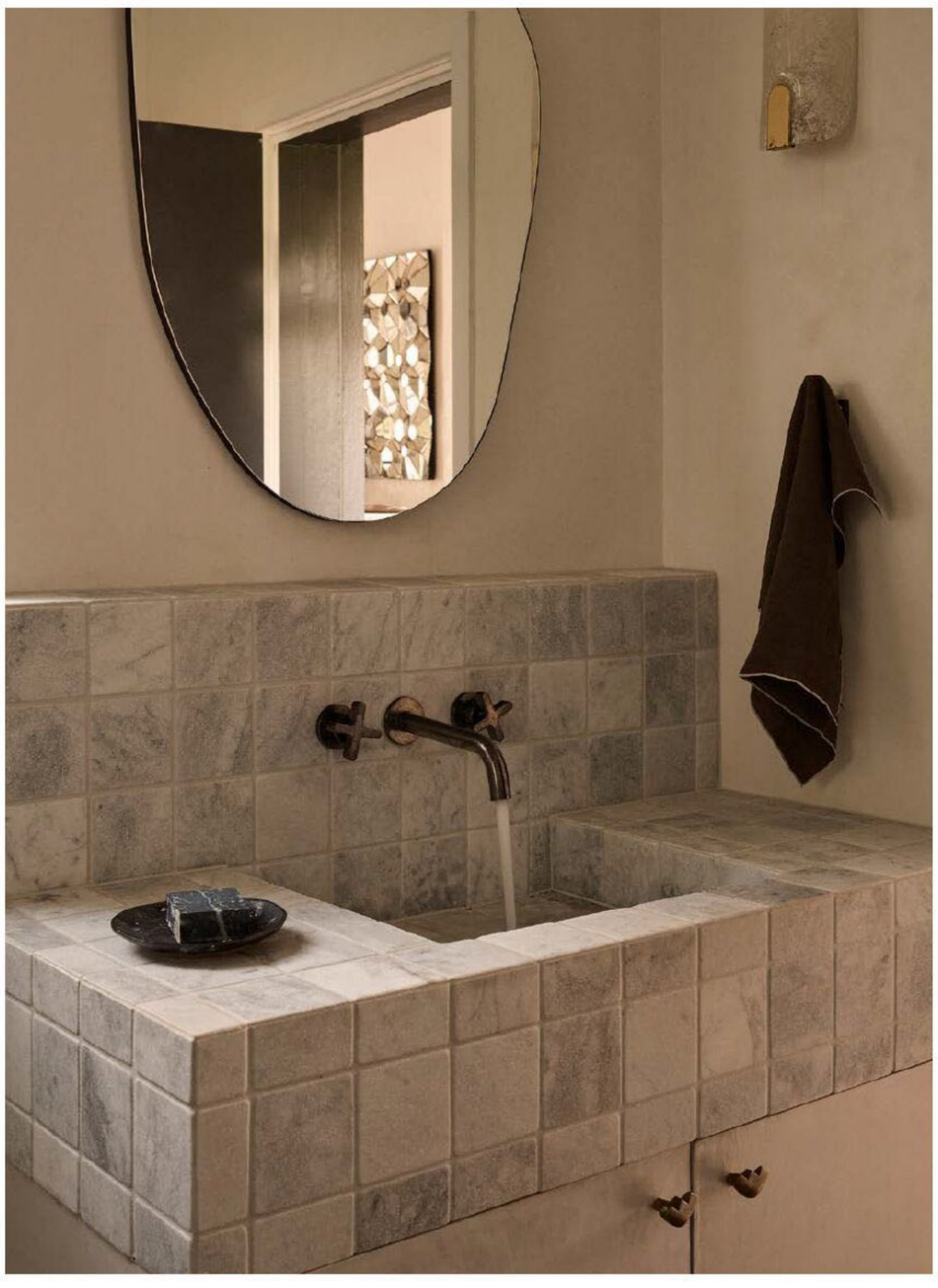


OPPOSITE PAGE In the living room, the Tigmi 'Nara' sofa sits alongside Cassina's 'Soriana' armchairs, while a 'Volcan de Feu' mirror by Olivier de Schrijver hangs above the fireplace. **THIS PAGE** Danielle McEwan, founder of Tigmi, loves her open-plan kitchen, dining room and living area, which she says is the heart of the home.

The places we spend our holidays as children can leave indelible marks. The memories, colours and sounds can meld to create an idyllic, hazy, happy place that we spend the rest of our lives trying to re-create. For Danielle McEwan, founder and creative director of Tigmi design studio, nearly every family holiday happened in Byron Bay. "I always wanted to be in Byron. It felt like home as soon as I landed here," she says.

The memories were there, but committing to an actual move from a modernist beachside apartment in Bondi and a big career in the music industry to a totally different life on the north coast of New South Wales wasn't cemented until she met her now-husband and business partner, Julian Packshaw, who was already living locally. "Jules was the driving factor, but I was really drawn to the beauty and there's a certain sort of healing quality here. It's a very unique place," she says. "The hinterland in particular makes me feel incredibly relaxed. It's a welcome respite from living in the city, going 100 miles an hour. It's been the best place to have children grow up and I feel very lucky





ABOVE The sunlight filtering into the kitchen creates an inviting warmth, particularly in the morning and late afternoon. **RIGHT** The bathroom evokes the beauty of Morocco, a place that inspired the launch of Tigmi.

to be able to bring them up in a very beautiful, free environment."

In an intersection of memory, personal stories and design, her home in the hills has taken on an elegant narrative that feels all-in McEwan. "What I lean into are things that have personal meaning, certainly some kind of design language that resonates with me — maybe I'd say contemporary vintage, some modernist design?" she says. "I'm drawn to shape, volume and texture. And great design and art. Something that feels a little more soulful than a new piece."

It's an aesthetic she's perfected in her business as well. Tigmi means 'my home' in Berber, and in the showroom you will find her selection of imported Moroccan rugs, contemporary vintage pieces and a small edit of exclusive designer brands. It all feels like a very earthy neo-deco home in itself. "Home is about bringing together a whole lot of different pieces that have different meanings, and quite often they are things that have been handed down to me," she says. "Everything has a personal story attached to it."

McEwan and Packshaw found the Nashua property 18 years ago, long before the rest of Australia decided moving to Byron was a great idea. It had been a dairy farm, with lush, green fields, and was home to two churches — one built in the late 18th century, the other in 1950. Laying some connecting paving between the churches created a shared entertaining space dominated by an olive tree. The black church houses the living areas — the kitchen, living and dining spaces — and the white church houses the private spaces, where the family can retreat to bedrooms and bathrooms. "It feels like we're living in this big U-shaped compound that, even though the buildings are separate, still feels really connected and protected."

McEwan wanted to be true to her intuition with the renovations and decor. "I try not to have too many rules; I think your home is such a reflection of your personality that it really needs to be an extension of yourself," she says. "And even if you think you don't know what [your style] is, there are things you're always drawn to — whether it's a palette, texture or even one object. I think it's important that we define ourselves through those pieces that have a personal sentiment; otherwise,

there's just no connection. Home, for me, is all about connection — to my family and to the things I've collected."

Her usual starting point for decorative projects is the floor. "A rug is a good place to start because it grounds the space — it frames the area," she explains. "So I try to start by working out how we want to define this space and how we want to feel when we're standing in this space." McEwan opted for an easy-to-clean vintage Oushak in the living room, a soft cashmere Tigmi rug from a new collection for a luxurious landing next to the bed and a practical jute runner for the kitchen.

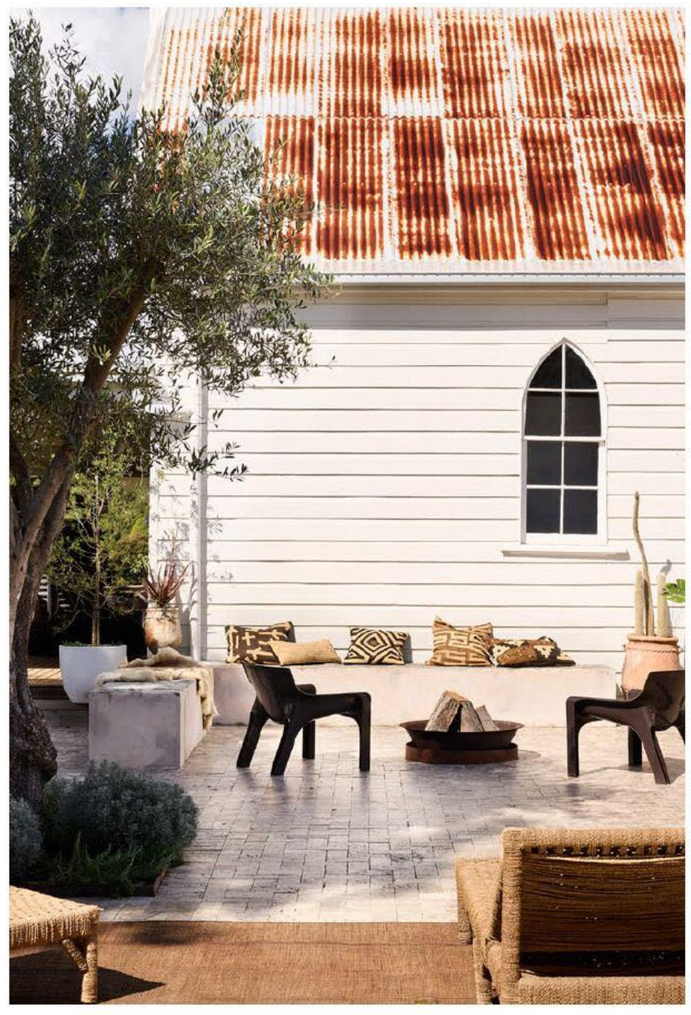
Adding wooden beams to the ceilings of the original church brought warmth. "It's a Presbyterian church, so by design is actually quite austere, very simple, with nothing ornamental about it," she explains. "They're just decorative, but they have warmed the whole space up and given it character."

French steel doors brought in more light and connected the church to the garden outside. "Obviously, churches are meant to look inward, so we wanted to bring more of that external light in and add character without detracting too much from the original design."

The lighting selections were also informed by the abundance of natural light flooding into the spaces. McEwan opted for pendants over halogens and layered in sconces and lamps to create a moody, soft-light landscape. "Vintage sconces can add really beautiful character, and I've got a couple of 'Natura' table lamps in the bedroom."

It's an interiors mix that had to work for the whole family and also be robust enough for country living. "We didn't think too hard about it; it just came together with all the things Jules and I are naturally drawn to," McEwan says. "He's got his favourite Percival Lafer chair, and I have my favourite 'Soriana' chairs. We both really enjoy it."

Next is a plan to connect the two buildings. "We'd love to make them join hands and finally come together," McEwan says. But for now, she just loves being in the spaces, surrounded by her personal stories and favourite pieces, making new memories.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE There are plenty of places to gather with family and friends, such as the outdoor firepit; McEwan's eclectic taste is evident throughout the home, including the brutalist chairs and plaster chandelier in the dining area; the open courtyard is surrounded by lush greenery.

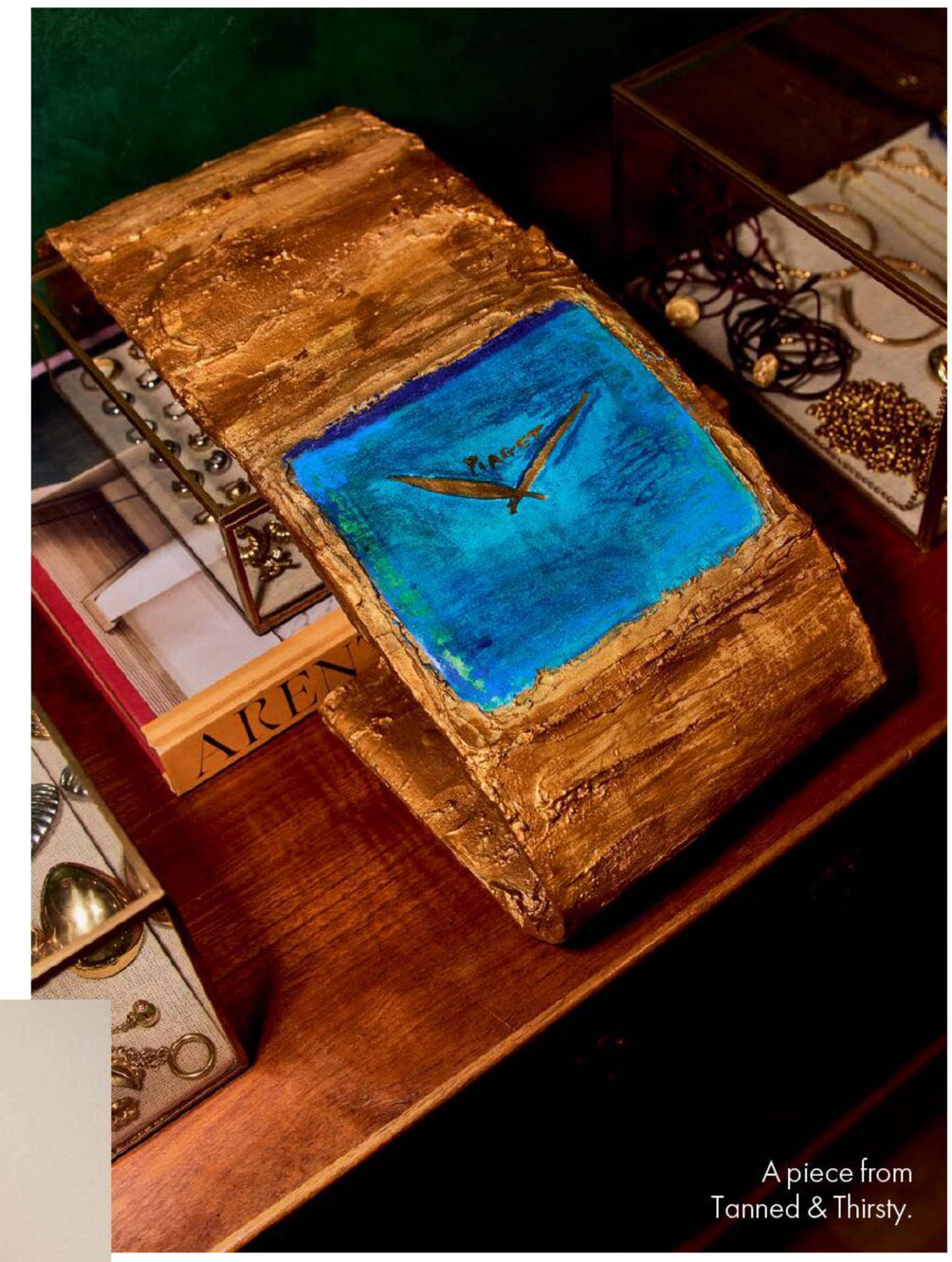




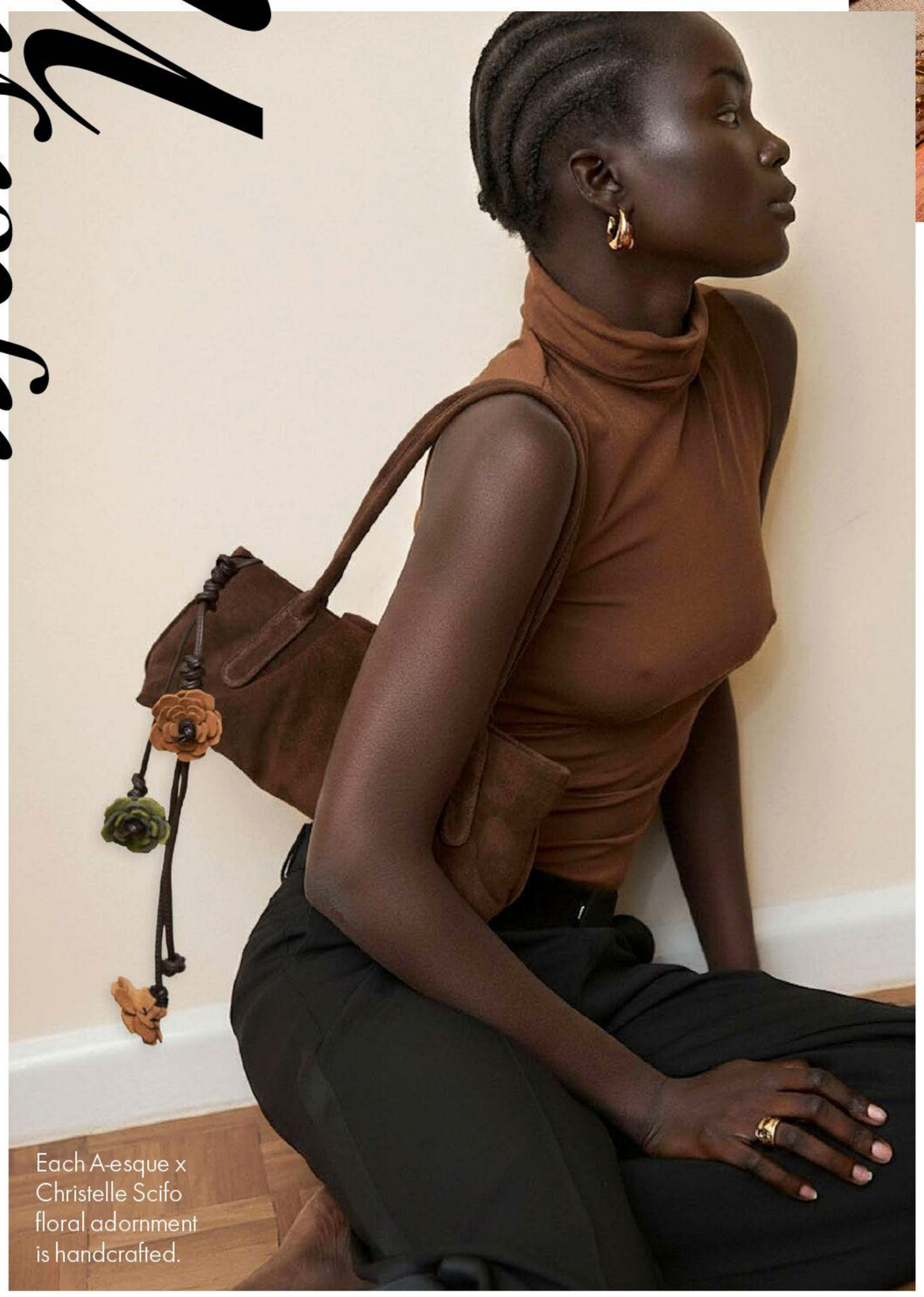
lifestyle news

Talent: Belinda Aucott-Christie

Belinda Aucott-Christie's thing is creating colourful vignettes depicting the finer things in life: think champagne, oysters and luxury watches. In her most recent exhibition, Tanned & Thirsty, her seductive new paintings and sculptures focused on a sexy, boozy summer spent holidaying in the Mediterranean. Chic and very collectable. @belindaaucott



A piece from Tanned & Thirsty.



Each A-esque x Christelle Scifo floral adornment is handcrafted.

Collab: A-esque x Christelle Scifo

If you're the kind who likes a thing on a string, ornate keyrings or jingly-jangly bag charms, the beautifully crafted leather and suede pieces from the collaboration between A-esque's Amanda Rettig and Christelle Scifo of Fleurette are what you need. a-esque.com

Object: River Table

Blending natural beauty with functionality, TheEnd's River Table is constructed from stones collected from Indonesian riverbeds and stylishly stacked to give big, fun Flintstones vibes. theendpiece.com



TheEnd tables, $1200 each.

WORDS BY ELIZA O'HARE

SAGE HAMMOND; COURTESY OF THE BRANDS.

Shop: P. Johnson, Jakarta

Newly opened in Jakarta is P. Johnson's 12th showroom, occupying an elegant ground-floor apartment within Comte Manoir, in the stylish Senopati district. With interiors created by founder Patrick Johnson's wife, star designer Tamsin Johnson, the space is a fitting home for the new collections of quiet luxury for men and women.



Tamsin Johnson brings her refined-yet-relaxed aesthetic to P. Johnson's Jakarta showroom.



The must-try arroz caldoso at Alzado.

Dine: Alzado

Upstairs at Ravesis on Bondi Beach is Alzado, with its endless Spanish-summer vibes and beach views from every table. It's a solid Saturday lunch spot for an oyster-infused martini and a plate of arroz caldoso, a Valencian specialty of wet rice with squid, mussels, clams and prawns. Hit the aperitivo hour (4-6pm weekdays) for a special sunset menu of spicy drinks and snacks. alzado.com.au

HOT IN THE CITY

AS WE GET SWEPT UP IN THE SPECTACLE OF PARIS FASHION WEEK, WE TAKE A LOOK AT THREE HOTELS THAT ARE JUST AS CHIC AS THE CLOTHES ON THE RUNWAY

WORDS BY ELIZA O'HARE

As it turns out, the three best hotels in Paris right now couldn't be more different — take your pick from a Left Bank Palace, a reimagined Holiday Inn and a converted mansion bursting with art. Each delivers its own take on Parisian hospitality, offering standout design, a distinctive atmosphere and a strong local point of view — proving there's no single way to stay stylish in the French capital.



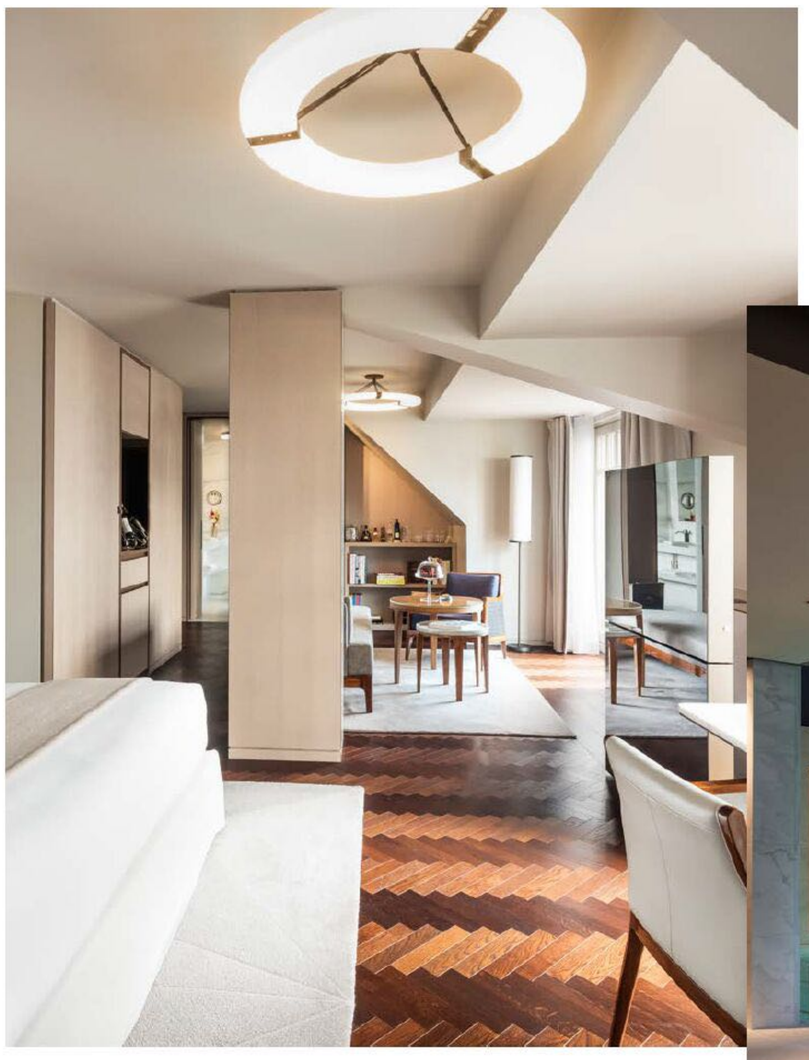
Mandarin Oriental Lutetia

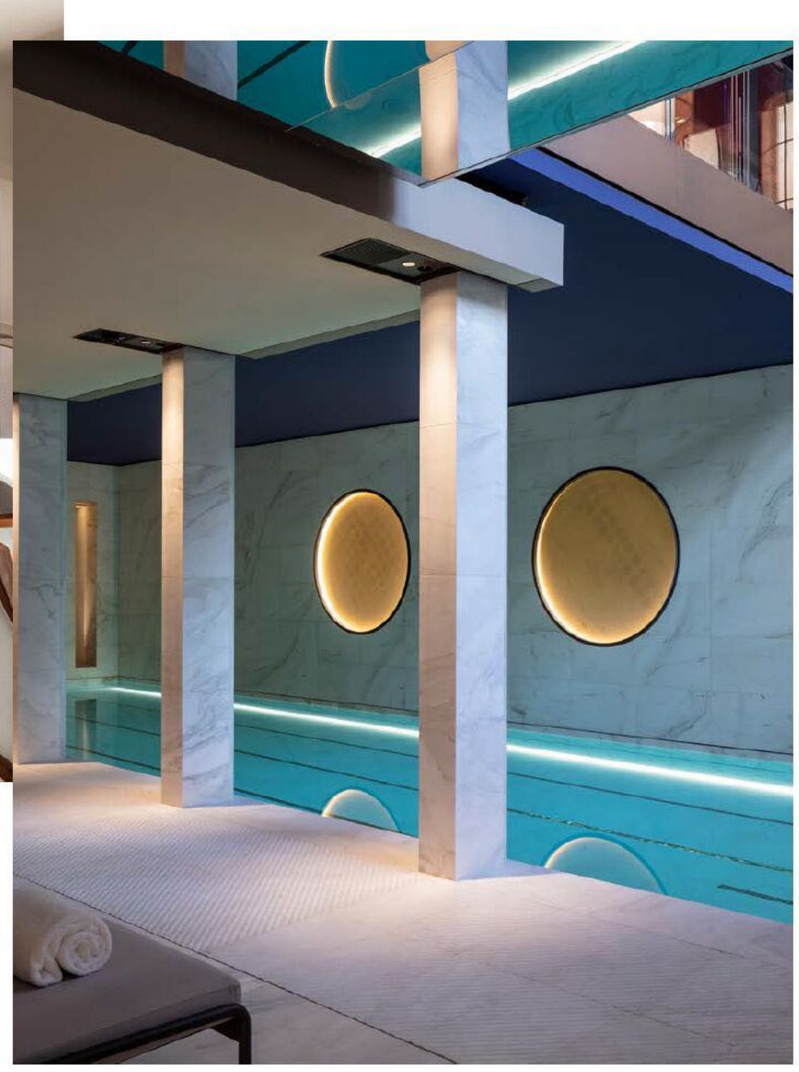
WHAT IT IS

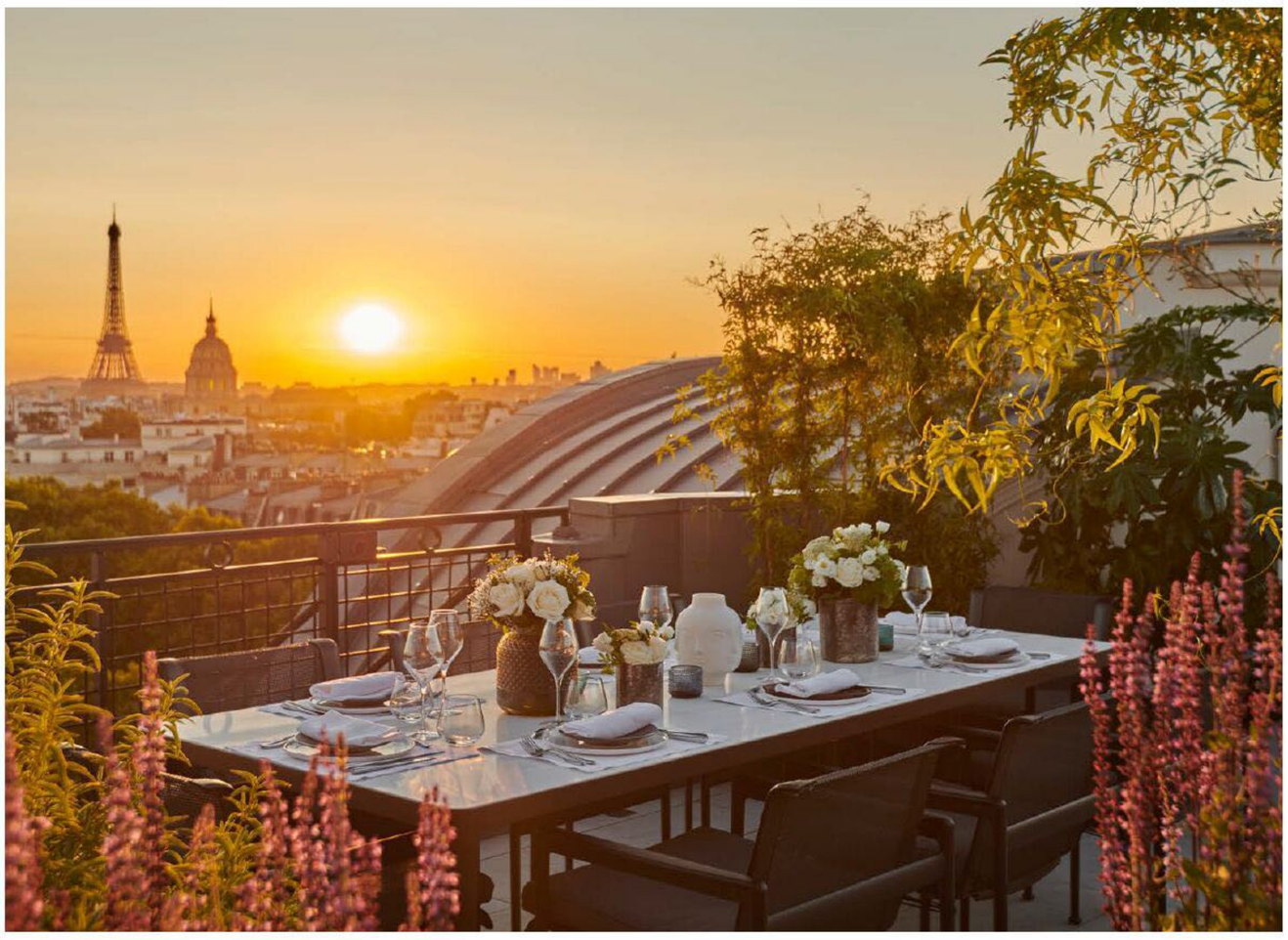
The Mandarin Oriental Lutetia is the Left Bank's only Palace hotel – a special distinction that stamps it as a hotel of the highest possible standards. Recently acquired by the Mandarin Oriental group, the hotel's certification came after a four-year renovation by architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte, who brought a striking modernism with moody corridors in reflective black lacquer, but also a painstaking restoration of delicate features including original frescoes. It reflects the hotel's dualism: simultaneously contemporary and absolutely historic. Inside, it's possible to go bar-hopping between its four bars and restaurants – Brasserie Lutetia, Bar Aristide, Bar Josephine and Le Saint-Germain.

LOCATION

You'll find the Mandarin Oriental Lutetia on Boulevard Raspail, in the Saint-Germain-des-Prés neighbourhood. It sits directly opposite Le Bon Marché department store and the legendary La Grande Épicerie de Paris food hall – the seafood display (featuring terrifying eels) is a work of art in itself. The hotel was originally built in 1910 by the Boucicaut family, owners of Le Bon Marché, so their high-roller fashion clients had sufficiently elegant accommodation close-by when they came to town on shopping expeditions. The Hermès flagship store is next door, and on Sundays, the Boulevard Raspail transforms into an organic street market that draws chic Parisians stocking up on fruits, cheese and flowers.









ROOMS

Jean-Michel Wilmotte's trademark blend of tradition and modernity is evident in all 184 rooms, including 47 suites. His inspiration was transatlantic adventure, with varnished woods, chevron parquetry and custom furniture by Poltrona Frau creating the feel of an old yacht. Every piece of technology is fully integrated and easy to master, and in a significant plus, the rooms have all been soundproofed. There's a suite inspired by French actor Isabelle Huppert and a penthouse dedicated to Francis Ford Coppola.

WHAT WE LOVE

Like at all Mandarin Oriental hotels, wellness is a core value at the Lutetia. The state-of-the-art Akasha Spa offers a 17-metre lap pool, sauna and fully kitted-out fitness centre. But it's the massage and facial therapies that keep guests returning. When you're ready to conquer the outside world, concierge can arrange a day trip in a vintage car to the Taittinger Estate in Champagne, followed by dinner back at the hotel prepared by chef Patrick Charvet.

THE GUEST LIST

Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse had stints of living in the hotel, and author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, entertainer Josephine Baker and writer James Joyce were regulars. Today, you may spot Catherine Deneuve, Charlotte Gainsbourg or Hedi Slimane.

mandarinoriental.com/en/paris/lutetia

San Régis

WHAT IT IS

A 19th-century *hôtel particulier* (private mansion), this neo-classical townhouse was converted into an intimate, ornate hotel and opened to the public in 1923. Since then, it's been an elegant, low-key bolthole for regular guests who are treated like family and prize the luxury of discretion that a boutique hotel can offer. The hotel is now run by two very stylish sisters, Sarah and Zeina Georges, who took over from their talented hotelier father, Elie. They are the caretakers of the famous in-house art collection. "Our art collection is very dear to us because it brings together works and objects carefully chosen by our father over the years," Zeina says. "These are not contemporary pieces, but they carry immense history and meaning for our family. Today, Sarah and I continue to enrich the collection by adding more contemporary works, creating a thoughtful dialogue between tradition and modernity throughout the hotel."







LOCATION

Located in a quiet residential street in the heart of the 8th arrondissement, the San Régis counts the Champs-Élysées, Arc de Triomphe and President Emmanuel Macron's official residence, the Élysée Palace, as neighbours. This is ground zero for serious fashion hunters, with Hermès, Dior, Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Saint Laurent stores all located nearby.





ROOMS

With just 30 rooms and 12 suites, this hotel is the definition of private and personal. The interiors were the brainchild of renowned designer Pierre-Yves Rochon, who has created a luxurious, intimate space. Part of his spectacular design arsenal was his deliberate use of multi-period furniture, creating an elegant mash-up of authentic pieces from the Louis XVI, Napoleon III, Regency and Chippendale eras. No two rooms are alike, but all have Diptyque amenities, and for textiles fans, exquisite *toile de jouy* and fabrics from Braquenié, Pierre Frey and Manuel Canovas. "Each room is individually decorated with unique objects carefully collected by my father. It creates a sense of intimacy and character that makes every stay truly special," says Zeina, whose favourite room is the Terrace Junior Suite thanks to the views it offers. "From one side you can admire the majestic glass roof of the Grand Palais, and from the other, the iconic Eiffel Tower, framed by the rooftops of Paris. So typically Parisian!"

WHAT WE LOVE

The San Régis prides itself on service, and employs a Les Clefs d'Or concierge – a member of the elite society of professional concierges, considered the best of the best with a global network of contacts devoted to accommodating any request that is 'morally, legally and humanly possible'. If you've never leant into a concierge before, take advantage of their incredible local knowledge and allow them to create a personalised itinerary for you using their dark powers of persuasion – including securing hard-to-get dinner reservations and secret one-off experiences. We have heard whispers of a personal architecture tour that visits private design houses after dark and ends with dinner in the home of a famous architect with a personal chef.

THE GUEST LIST

This place has always been an undercover retreat for the creative crowd, starting with Carmel Snow, pioneering editor-in-chief of US *Harper's BAZAAR*, plus Lauren Bacall, Romy Schneider, Gene Kelly, Jacqueline Bisset, Candice Bergen and Louis Malle.

hotel-sanregis.fr/en/

Hôtel Dame des Arts

WHAT IT IS

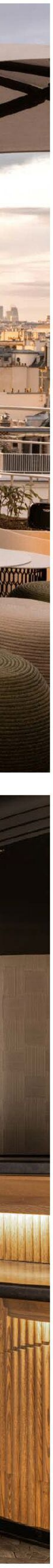
Originally a Holiday Inn, the hotel was built in 1959 to offer modest and affordable accommodation with easy access to the most incredible locations. It also boasted a rare, secret rooftop that elevated it to something special. The Holiday Inn was snapped up by hotelier Imshan Jamal, who discovered the rooftop and could sense the potential. In 2019, he enlisted star designer Raphael Navot (famed for the interiors of David Lynch's Parisian nightclub, Silencio) to completely transform the hotel, creating a warm, sleek space that heroes natural materials. As a bonus, there is also arguably the chicest hotel gym in Paris – a minimalist, Nordic-inspired fitness studio with handcrafted equipment from NOHRD. It's artsy and cool, and the hotel merch is très chic, too – the totes and ashtrays make great souvenirs.

LOCATION

The hotel sits in the Latin Quarter on the Left Bank – historically the home of students and intelligentsia, and now a luxe, bohemian neighbourhood rich in bookstores and home to the Sorbonne. It's one of the most Insta-friendly neighbourhoods in Paris, and close to many must-visit eateries, including Café de Flore, Brasserie Lipp and Les Deux Magots. Adeline Misko, the hotel's marketing manager, says there's a lot to love about the local area. "Literature, art, music and history are everywhere. You can spend an afternoon browsing legendary bookshops, visiting intimate art galleries or enjoying a jazz evening in one of the nearby venues – all within walking distance."

One particularly special experience is a walk towards the newly reopened Notre-Dame in the early hours of the morning, when the city is still waking up. "The streets are quiet, the light is soft and the cathedral feels even more sacred and enchanting," Misko says. "Later in the day, a stroll through the Jardin du Luxembourg is the perfect way to slow down and fully absorb the spirit of the Left Bank."







ROOMS

Rooms are small but gorgeous, and the beds are generous. The best view is offered by the Junior Suite Terrace – a 29-square-metre room with a cracking private balcony. "Waking up and seeing the Eiffel Tower as the first view of the day, or taking a shower with the Eiffel Tower in sight, is an unforgettable experience," Misko says. "Beyond the view, these suites offer comfort and a strong sense of Parisian elegance. They allow guests to feel both deeply connected to the city and completely at ease."

WHAT WE LOVE

It's moody and minimal, and the vibey restaurant and rooftop bar attracts both guests and locals – something most hotels around the world struggle to achieve. It means you can experience an authentic local vibe without ever leaving the hotel. "Hôtel Dame des Arts is not just a hotel, but a living place within the neighbourhood," Misko says. "From the very beginning, our goal was to collaborate with local creatives, musicians, artists and professionals, and to create spaces where Parisians would naturally want to return – a place they could feel at home. When locals feel comfortable and come regularly, guests immediately experience something real – the mix happens organically."

The restaurant, Pimpan, is all soft lighting and velvet-covered banquets, but the rooftop bar is the hot ticket. Sitting above the slate shingle rooftops of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the bar invites the Italian custom of aperitivo. The rooftop is weather-dependent and, even if you're a hotel guest, bookings are recommended to nab your table with a view of the sun setting into the Eiffel Tower.





THE GUEST LIST

The neighbourhood was once frequented by famous artists and intellectuals like Ernest Hemingway and Simone de Beauvoir. So it's not surprising that the hotel has a real creative vibe – making it a magnet for photographers, models and directors. And there are plans to further cement its arts program this year. "Guests will be able to experience curated workshops, talks, exhibitions and private viewings, imagined as moments of dialogue between artists, creators and our community," Misko explains. "The idea is not only to showcase art, but to make it accessible, lived and shared."

damedesarts.com/en/

LUDOVIC BALAY; ANAEL BOULAY; AMIT GERON; GERRIT MEIER; FABRICE RAMBERT; ROMAIN RICARD; MAURINE TRIC; COURTESY OF THE HOTELS

Star factor

WORDS BY BERNARD FITZWALTER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY ZHENYA Z



PRADA S/S 2026

PISCES

February 19–March 20

In the past, you've let yourself be carried along by the flow of events, but for your present relationship worries, that won't work. Your own planets are more powerful than your partner's, and Mars is in your sign at the moment to give you the strength to act – so you'll have to make the big decisions for both of you. Arguments are inevitable, but don't let that distract you from what has to be done.



CHANEL S/S 2026

ARIES

March 21–April 19

As you strive to reach something you've set your heart on, you may stumble at an unforeseen financial obstacle, causing the whole plan to crash. You'll feel helpless and disappointed, until a friend suggests a way forward that has worked for you in the past and could do so again. Give it a go – it'll be much easier and more rewarding this time. Maybe this is the path you should have followed from the start.



BALENCIAGA S/S 2026

TAURUS

April 20–May 20

This year's most potent influences, Saturn and Neptune, now act to close a door on the past. Normally, you would try to defend your position and resist any changes; but as you look back at where you were, you may realise that you don't want to be there anymore. This willingness to move on, from choice rather than because you have to, signals a huge shift in your thinking – you're ready to face the future at last.



BOTTEGA VENETA S/S 2026

GEMINI

May 21–June 20

You may have been so eager to leave a difficult situation behind you that you ignored the compensation you were due. March gives you a chance to go back and claim it. You should do this because it will help you financially, but also to show that you're aware of your rights and ready to fight for them. It will make you a stronger opponent if you need to fight a similar battle in the future.

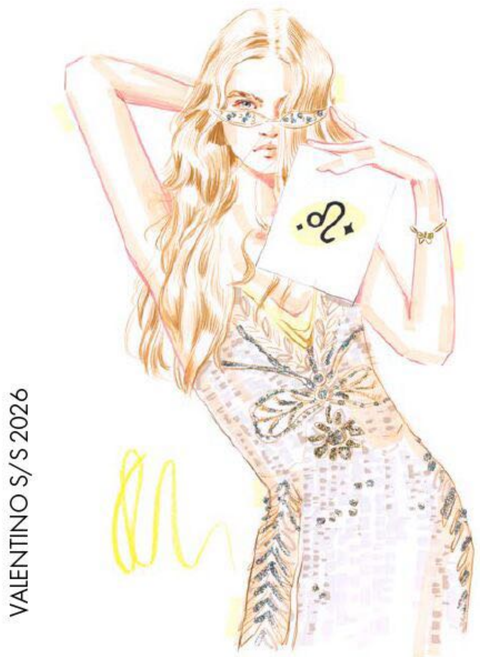


CHLOÉ S/S 2026

CANCER

June 21–July 22

You seem to be taking a step up in your career, but you may find yourself wondering whether you deserve it. Is this a promotion on merit, or do you just know the right people? In the end, it doesn't matter. If you can't handle the challenges of your new role, you'll soon be moved on; if you can, then you will be even more popular and successful than you are now. Fortune is smiling on you, so run with it.



VALENTINO S/S 2026

LEO

July 23–August 22

You have big plans for the future, and you're doing your best to make it all happen, but you still can't quite see how you can put it all together to bring the success you've been hoping for. Don't worry – the missing piece of the puzzle will come shortly and make everything fall into place. Late March may see you making a long-term agreement; read it through carefully before you say yes.



LOEWE S/S 2026

VIRGO

August 23–September 22

You have allowed a relationship to go in a direction you didn't really want, in the hope that everything would all work out well in the end – but now it's clear that what you wanted is not going to happen. This month's full moon in your sign is an eclipse, suggesting that it's time to make a new start. Whether that means accepting the limitations of the relationship or looking elsewhere, only you can decide.



DIOR S/S 2026

LIBRA

September 23–October 22

The end of one relationship, the start of another. Or maybe the end of one stage of a relationship, the start of another. But the two events are so close together that you can't help feeling slightly guilty about it all. You hadn't exactly planned it this way, and yet here you are – and you may have a little explaining to do when friends ask questions. Rest assured, everything will eventually work out for the best.



GUCCI S/S 2026

SCORPIO

October 23–November 21

You are about to discover the difference between love and passion. Passion is strong, direct and focused; love is much softer, but also surprising and harder to define – and in the end, stronger. What you thought was a love affair that you could easily control is rapidly becoming something far more complex, and that's worrying you. As always, trust and communication are key. Be honest about what you want.



MIU MIU S/S 2026

SAGITTARIUS

November 22–December 21

It's time to get moving. If you feel like you have become stuck where you are, the Sun and Mars will help get you going again with two very obvious opportunities, both arising in March. But what will really make up your mind is an eclipse occurring at the top of your chart, which will show that something you had once hoped for will no longer happen. No point in waiting around then, is there?



ALAÏA S/S 2026

CAPRICORN

December 22–January 19

Whatever you wear, and for whatever activity, if it restricts your movement, you won't perform well – and that applies in wider life as well as in the gym. After February's era-defining conjunction of outer planets, March sees a small but significant softening, giving you a little bit of extra time and space to make sure you are comfortable and mentally ready before launching your next big project.



CELINE S/S 2026

AQUARIUS

January 20–February 18

Does your present lifestyle – where you live, your daily routines – help you make progress, or is it actually holding you back? How much of what you think of as essential do you really need? Would a simpler life give you more time to spend on the things that you really wanted? Don't be afraid to radically reassess your ambitions – done properly, it can be a refreshing, invigorating process.

My life in fashion

AUDREY LEES

THE AUSTRALIAN MODEL SHARES HER STYLE INSPIRATIONS AND LOVE OF VINTAGE SHOPPING



I see what I wear as an extension of myself. If I had to describe my style, I'd say casual-cool meets frazzled '70s schoolteacher.



I never sought out modelling; it just sort of happened. I love it because it allows me to immerse myself in the different worlds of fashion and learn so much about its history and culture.

My grandmother [below] is a big style inspiration. Being little and seeing pictures of her in mod-cut dresses definitely planted a seed in my head early on. She's an eccentric lady and, as I get older, I appreciate her taste more and more.

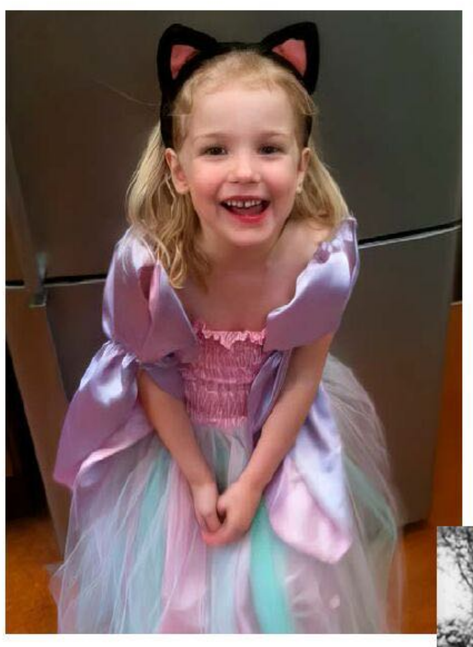




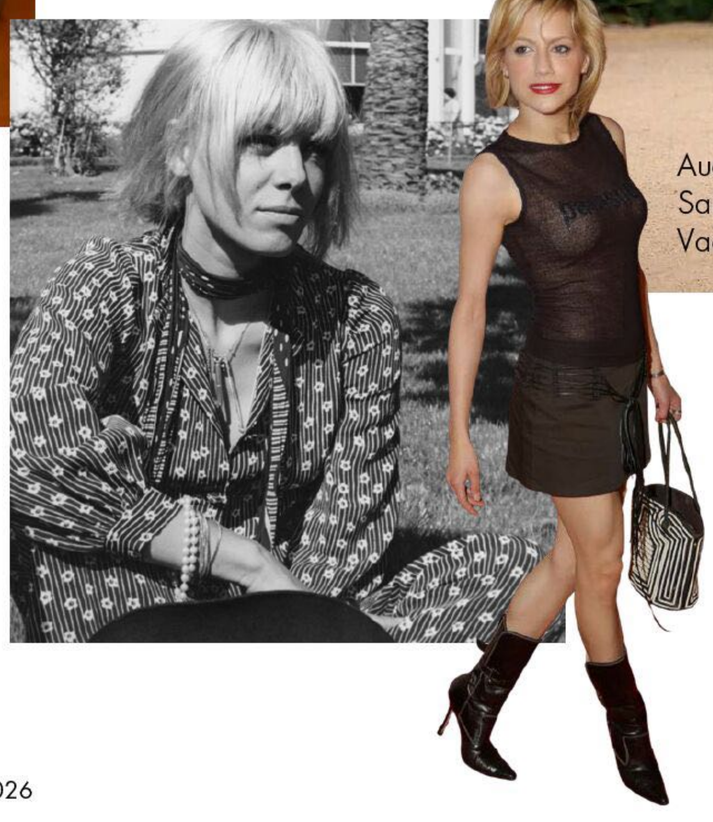
My first fashion week season [in 2025] was a career highlight: an exclusive in Milan, plus the shows I got to be a part of in Paris. The feeling of honour and excitement will never wear off.

Audrey Lees walks for Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello S/S 2026.

I love the hunt of second-hand shopping – anything vintage and of good quality that catches my eye. I can never help myself when I strike gold.



Growing up, I was always drawn to the playfulness of fashion; the ability to put something on and transform into a different character, or a version of yourself that makes you feel good. My mum credits my love of fashion to the closet full of fairy dresses I had as a little girl.



I currently admire the style of Anita Pallenberg [right], my best friend Bella (always) and Brittany Murphy [far right].

I live from place to place. Mostly Paris. I feel so lucky that I get the opportunity to see the style in such different places. It gives me inspiration and it forces me to explore new places independently.



GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF AUDREY LEES.
AS TOLD TO ALEXANDRA ENGLISH

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