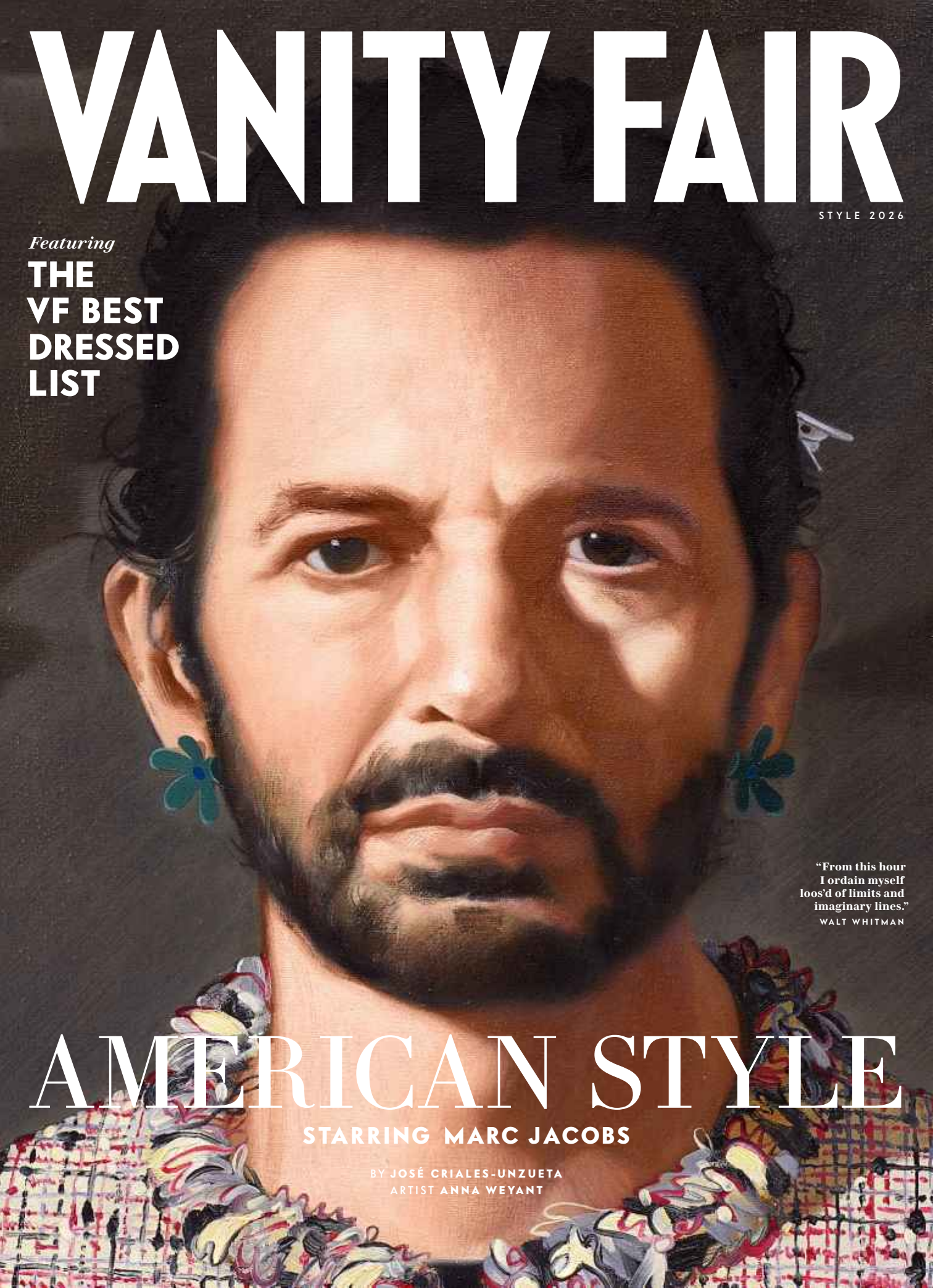
VANITY FAIR

STYLE 2026

Featuring

THE VF BEST DRESSED LIST



"From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and imaginary lines."
WALT WHITMAN

AMERICAN STYLE

STARRING MARC JACOBS

BY JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA
ARTIST ANNA WEYANT

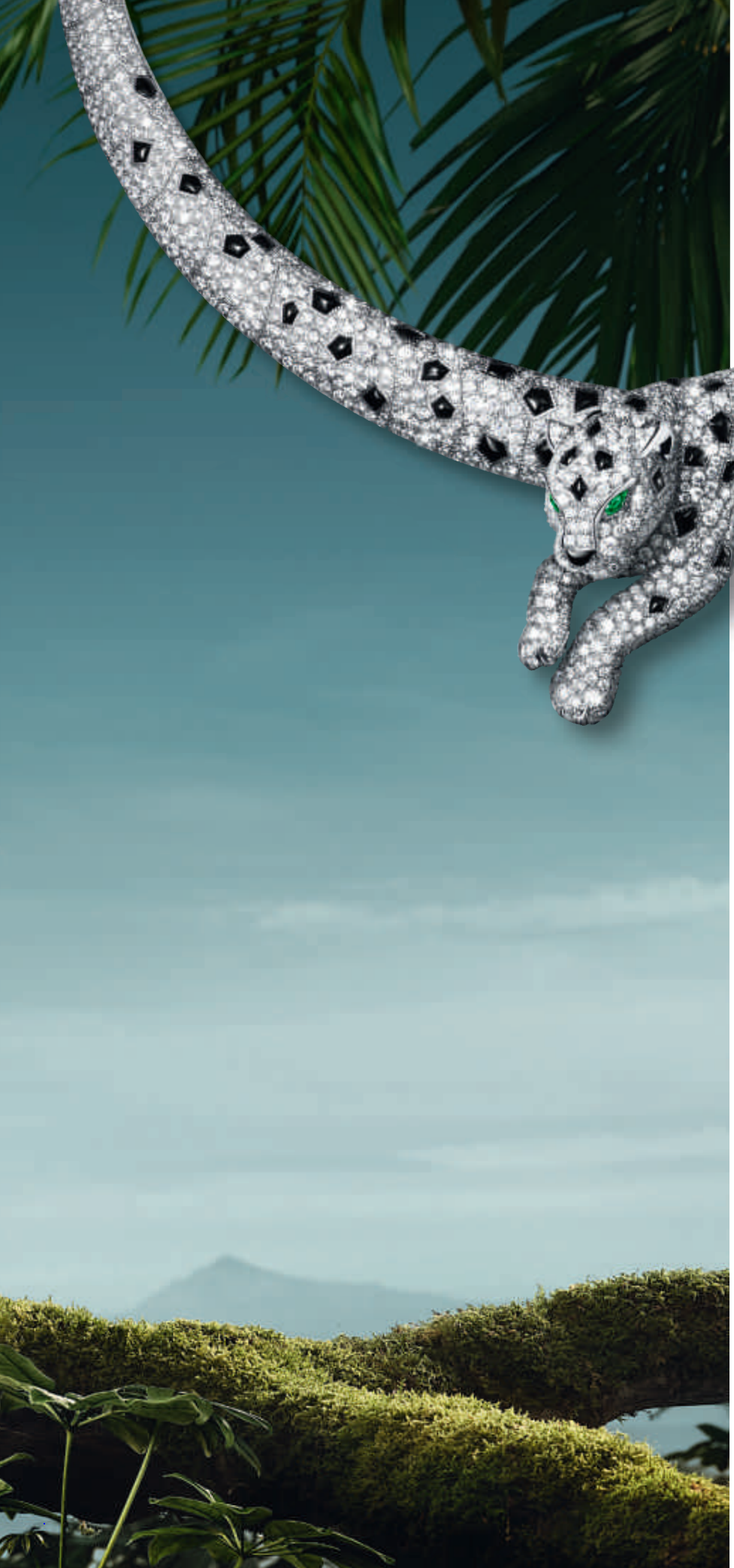



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"YOU CAN HAVE THE BILLIONAIRES... YOU CAN HAVE THE MODELS, BUT YOU NEEDED TO HAVE THE DRAG QUEENS, AND YOU NEEDED TO HAVE THE SURFER BOYS AND THE ARTISTS AND THE AUTHORS."
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Anna Weyant, *Marc Jacobs,* 2026, oil on canvas, $19^{15}/_{16}$ in. by $16^{1}/_{16}$ in. © Anna Weyant. Courtesy of Gagosian.

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SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

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Eleven years ago yesterday, Donald Trump lit upon the border town of Laredo, Texas, wearing for the very first time a baseball hat that declared, begged, demanded: MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN. It was white with navy embroidery—the more zealous red came later—with a brim just as wide and flat as a grandpa's golfing cap. In the prelapsarian days of 2015, when our would-be dictator was mostly a punch line, hipsters in Williamsburg started wearing MAGA hats as a joke. They sold out on Trump's official website and at the store in Trump Tower. "Trump's Campaign Hat Becomes Ironic Summer Accessory," Ashley Parker reported in the *New York Times* Style section.

One decade, one year, and one day later, the red cap has become the red line of our divided society: Wear it and you are either embraced or shunned. There is no neutral reaction—even in Spain. Ferran Torres, the Barcelonan forward who scored the championship-clinching goal in the World Cup final, wore a red "Make Spain Great Again" cap during a victory parade in Madrid, sparking retweets from the White House and derision in *El País*. Today, the president distributes MAGA hats from the Oval Office Study, which he maliciously calls the Monica Lewinsky Room and operates like a theme park gift shop. (Payment is accepted in the form of crypto and Boeing 747s.)

There could hardly be a more vivid example of what front-row habitués call the "power of fashion." By that, we—yes, I consider myself a card-carrying fashion person—mean that clothes don't just conceal the body, they reveal the mind. They can express individuality or, more often, collectivity: I am *this* kind of person; I belong to *that* tribe. And MAGA understands that better than anyone. Certainly better than the Democrats. You might call it the fashion of power.

So begins *Vanity Fair*'s 2026 Style Issue. Pulitzer Prize–winning critic Robin Givhan picks up on this idea in "Radical Chic" (page 26), which posits that MAGA has hijacked fashion to evangelize its own rigid, retro vision of America, particularly in her hometown of Washington, DC. There are only two genders but many ounces of hairspray.



MARK GUIDUCCI

Elsewhere in this issue, my former *Vogue* colleague Tonne Goodman and the photographer Luis Alberto Rodriguez offer a modern take on classic American style archetypes: hippies, suits, a society swan, and a cowboy alongside clean girls, baddies, and a looksmaxxer. My favorite group is the preppies, for which we cast nine *Vanity Fair* writers and editors.

What Style Issue would be complete without a Best Dressed List? Ours is not to be confused with the International Best Dressed List, the august register founded by Eleanor Lambert and steered by my predecessor Graydon Carter, with editors Aimée Bell, Amy Fine Collins (who appears in this portfolio, page 44), and the late, great Reinaldo Herrera, though we hope it carries on the original spirit. The selections were made by *Vanity Fair*'s José Criales-Unzueta, Lindsey Underwood, and Derek C. Blasberg, who also contributed a very colorful oral history of Bungalow 8 with an even more colorful headline ("The 8 Ball," page 112).

José wrote more than a half dozen stories for this issue—by the time you read this, he better be on vacation—including the profile of Marc Jacobs, our unconventional, undeniable cover star. Marc reinvents himself more often than Madonna (and perhaps even more successfully), and this summer began a new chapter following the announcement of LVMH's sale of his company. This is his first extensive interview since, and Marc answered all of José's questions with the kind of humor, candor, and resilience that reminds us why he is still our most interesting American designer. I am so thrilled that Anna Weyant, one of Marc's favorite artists and mine, painted his portrait for our cover.

A few weeks before this issue went to print, we were discussing how *Vanity Fair* should mark America's 250th anniversary. We already had plans to photograph model Anok Yai, an Egypt-born South Sudanese top model and naturalized American citizen. Who better to represent the American spirit? The star-spangled images by Haitian photographer Philip-Daniel Ducasse became our July Fourth digital cover and now, by popular demand, a special print edition. You'll see that Anok wears only the US flag. Hats off to that.

JEWELRY BY CARTIER. MARK GUIDUCCI: STUART WINECOFF. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.



PHILIP-DANIEL DUCASSE

"AMERICA'S TOP MODEL," P. 13

"Working with Anok always feels natural," says Ducasse, a Brooklyn-based photographer raised in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. "She's someone I've always admired, not just because she's one of the best at what she does but because she's a real one," he says. "Those are the days you live for as a photographer: reconnecting with old friends and creating something that feels effortless."



ROBIN GIVHAN

"RADICAL CHIC," P. 26

In this issue, Givhan, the Pulitzer Prize–winning writer and former senior critic at large for *The Washington Post,* set out to define MAGA style. "I wanted to consider what these aesthetic gestures said about gender, race, and especially power," she says. "Nothing about the look is particularly new, but it's not quite retro either. I wanted to understand where this kind of personal presentation was coming from and where it was trying to take us."



SEBASTIÁN FAENA

"A SINGULAR MAN," P. 94
"FLOW STATE," P. 108

For Faena, a filmmaker and photographer from Buenos Aires, photographing Haider Ackermann, Chemena Kamali, and their muses at Tom Ford and Chloé, respectively, was like seeing "old friends." "I showed up and documented the moment honestly," Faena says. "Haider and Chemena made it very easy."



JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA

"INDELIBLE MARC," P. 82

From profiling the incomparable Marc Jacobs and interviewing supermodel Anok Yai to compiling a list of today's most compelling dressers and collaborating on a fashion portfolio about American style, *VF* fashion correspondent Criales-Unzueta put his stamp on the Style Issue. "When I came to *VF,* fashion people asked me what exactly I planned or hoped to do at the magazine. This is it."



LUIS ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ

"THE UNITED STATES OF STYLE," P. 66

Prior to his career in the visual arts, photographer Rodriguez trained as a dancer, graduating from LaGuardia High School, receiving a BFA from Juilliard, and performing worldwide. Now he continues to study movement in his work, often using his subject's body in both sculptural and abstract ways. He is the author of monographs *People of the Mud* (2020) and *O* (2023).



DEREK C. BLASBERG

"THE 8 BALL," P. 112

"Amy Sacco didn't just throw parties—she created a world," says *VF* special correspondent Blasberg, who compiled an oral history of Bungalow 8. "Reliving that era with the queen herself, and so many members of her court, was surreal. The deeper I got, the more I realized I wasn't just reporting on a club; I was revisiting a version of New York that shaped a generation and still feels heartbreakingly close."



HILLARY BUSIS

WE NOMINATE FOR OBLIVION, P. 16

"I love complaining, and getting paid to do so in writing feels like getting away with something," says Busis, *VF*'s features editor and the voice of We Nominate for Oblivion. In this issue she makes the case against wearable tech—from Apple watches to Meta glasses. Previously she has nominated the term *nepo baby,* therapyspeak, Mercury in retrograde, and cruises.



TONNE GOODMAN

"THE UNITED STATES OF STYLE," P. 66

In this issue, Goodman, a veteran *Vogue* editor, collaborated with Luis Alberto Rodriguez to capture the varying archetypes found across the nation. "The fun of this shoot was working with all the characters that were involved to show just how unique American style is: fearless individuality and unabashed freedom of expression," she says. "It celebrates our diversity, which is our greatest strength."

GIVHAN: KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI. BLASBERG: KARLIE KLOSS. BUSIS: ALLISON SCHALLER. GOODMAN: TESS AYANO. CRIALES-UNZUETA, DUCASSE, FAENA, RODRIGUEZ: COURTESY OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.





SIMPLY DOES IT

Late summer's pared-back chic welcomes soft colour palettes, clean silhouettes and elemental travel

■ *Finer Things*

MORTAL COIL: The Boucheron Serpent Bohème Necklace (**5**) features contrasting 18-carat yellow gold with black onyx. *boucheron.com*

ALL FIRED UP: With a pink sapphire crystal dial, pink and mint-green ceramic case, and sky-blue bezel, the Hublot Big Bang Summer Multi-Coloured Ceramic (**2**) is a joy to behold on any wrist. *hublot.com*

■ *Style File*

HOLD YOUR HORSES: Unlike the equestrian feeder bags that it took its inspiration from, this Hermès Picotin Lock Micro Broderie bag (**1**) is crafted in the softest calfskin. *hermes.com*

IT'S IN THE DETAILS: The Dear Frances Topo Flat with strap (**4**) is deceptively minimalist with a structured mesh and suede edging. *dearfrances.com*

BRUSH WORK: Elevate your hairbrush with a new Rosanna x La Bonne Brosse (**8**), the design of which is inspired by shibori, a Japanese fabric dying technique. *labonnebrosse.com*

■ *On Beauty*

FORGET ME NOT: Mixing fruity notes with an amber-rich depth, the new Chanel Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu (**6**) leaves a lasting impression. *chanel.com*

DAY BY DAY: Daily protection is assured with the fast-absorbing Skincycles Solar Serum SPF50 (**7**). *skincycles.com*

■ *For Pleasure*

SOUTHERN BELLE: Blended with grenache noir, cinsault, syrah and vermentino grapes, Eau de Provence (**9**) delivers a delicate yet crisp flavour. *eau-de-provence.com*

MAKE A SCENE: Spanning a 30-year career, *Es Devlin: Other Worlds* at the Design Museum (**10**) from October 2 features seminal works from the artist and designer. *designmuseum.org*

TURKISH DELIGHT: Set on a private peninsula with views over the Aegean Sea, Maxx Royal Bodrum offers suites and villas, alongside exceptional fine dining. (**3**). *maxxroyal.com*



ES DEVLIN: RICHARD ROUND-TURNER © THE DESIGN MUSEUM.



PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW URWIN

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VANITIES



AMERICA'S ~~NEXT~~ TOP MODEL

Anok Yai is a talent who invites comparison to Linda Evangelista and Naomi Campbell. She tells JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA about subverting expectations—and the new chapter she's hoping to start onscreen

Earlier this summer, as temperatures and the New York Knicks' chances of winning the NBA Finals rose, Anok Yai began to pray. At a watch party for Game 4, she picked a rosary off of a table, where it was lodged between empty beer glasses, and enlisted the other guests to infuse it with their energy. She had not prayed a rosary in some time, but the gambit worked.

Yai is a supermodel, a child of South Sudanese refugees who found safe haven in the US—an immigrant who became an iconic face of her generation. If you've met her, you may know that she likes to paint; you'd definitely know she's funnier and softer than her sharp features and fierce walk might imply. But you may not know that she prays, or that she was raised Catholic. Clearly she's multifaceted.

Yai is an original as well as a star who follows in the tradition of the supermodels who preceded her. She was only the second Black model to open a Prada show after Naomi Campbell became the first in 1997. Like Linda Evangelista, she's known for her

chameleonic appearance, able to shapeshift depending on her current hairstyle or her assignment. In the spirit of Christy Turlington, she's industrious and eager to build a legacy that transcends her image.

At 28, Yai has graced the cover of *Vogue* more than a dozen times across the magazine's global editions. This year she was named one of *Time*'s 100 most influential people. Yai was first scouted after a photo of her at Howard University's homecoming week went viral in 2017, when she was 19. This past May, when images of her 2026 Met Gala look hit social media, she found internet fame once more.

Balenciaga creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli had outfitted her as a Black Madonna in a voluminous black haute couture gown, her face gilded and accented by prosthetic tears. Yai played the part on the red carpet using the same range she uses to embody various characters on the runway: She's coy for Chanel, glamazonian for Versace, voracious for Saint Laurent. Last October she transformed into the title character of *Edward Scissorhands* at Vogue World: Hollywood, channeling the essence of Johnny Depp; there, she also told me that she hoped one day to become an actor. After seeing her at the Met Gala, I believed it.

Yai's ensemble made such an impact that one of her many ardent fans had an image of her face from The Met tattooed onto his forearm. And no, that is not the first time that's happened to Yai; she knows of at least one other.

If anyone thought that the era of supermodels becoming crossover stars was over—or that models couldn't become famous without the assistance of a famous parent—Yai is here to prove them wrong. She's not a Hadid or a Jenner; if anything, she's more closely following the path of Karlie Kloss, who parlayed fashion-world fame into a mainstream career. Celebrity isn't something Yai expected, or something she's one hundred percent comfortable with. But she's getting there. "I was shocked about the percentage of real estate that these people would give me on their bodies," she says, laughing. "The first one felt weird. But now it's *fab*."

It's now mid-June, and in honor of America's 250th birthday, Yai is embracing an American flag. Anok Yai is an African supermodel. Anok Yai is an American supermodel. In the land of the free and the home of the brave, both statements ring true.

When we ask her to pose alongside the American flag, she is as daunted as she is flattered. But once she holds the star-spangled banner in her arms, her demeanor transforms. Yai drapes the flag around her body and holds onto it tightly. She asks the production crew for a mirror to finesse her pose, using a trick she picked up at her first shoot with the famed fashion photographer Steven Meisel. "I always would say I'm African first," she tells me minutes before this photo is taken. "I grew up here, so I'm American too."

Like Yai, I am an immigrant; unlike her, I did not grow up in the United States. But we share an indelible part of the American experience: This country afforded us the space and the opportunity to become. Our generation has a contentious relationship with Americanness and its symbols, which have been co-opted by a pocket of this country that does not always represent people like Yai or me—or those with less privilege and therefore less opportunity. A pocket that demonstrably does not want us here. But in Yai's story, and in my own as I write this today, I see the realization of the dream we were both promised.

"Growing up, I was really insecure about my skin color," Yai says of the racism she experienced once her parents relocated her and her siblings from Egypt, where she was born, to New Hampshire. At the time, Yai was around four years old. "I was...I wouldn't say I was bullied," she says, "'cause I fought back. But I grew up being told that my skin wasn't beautiful." When a lie like this becomes a constant refrain, she says, "you start to believe it."

She never saw herself as anything other than African when she was young—she was a kid, and an ostracized one at that. But she has learned to love both her heritage and her adopted home country. "Doing this story, and doing the cover with the American flag," Yai says, "it's just a representation of the fact that America is a melting pot. It's a land of immigrants, and we're all American."

As a kid, Yai was obsessed with science and books. "My dad would force me to read dictionaries when I was in kindergarten to fifth grade, and he would quiz me on words that I learned," she says. "If I did it, I'd get McDonald's, so I read everything. Obviously I only wanted McDonald's, but it helped a lot with my work ethic."

She describes her younger self as a nerd—but a stylish one. In high school, says Yai, "I would dress crazy." She had a pink mohawk, which seems fitting for one of modeling's most versatile characters—someone able to sport a bald head today, 30-inch hair with a middle part tomorrow, a little pixie the day after, and a short bob that afternoon. "I've always been obsessed with fashion," she says, "but it didn't really cross my mind when I was studying to try to start modeling." She couldn't afford to throw caution to the wind and move to New York, "and I had tunnel vision," she says. "I wanted to become a doctor."

"THEY'RE LIKE, 'OH, YOU SPEAK REALLY GOOD ENGLISH!' AND I'M LIKE, 'I'M FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE, BABE!' "

She didn't. In 2017, while enrolled at Plymouth State University, Yai went to Howard's homecoming on a whim.

"I didn't even want to go" that weekend, Yai says. But her friend did. There was the promise of a fun time, "and cute boys." Then her entire world changed.

"I remember when the photos started going viral. My phone was blowing up, and the first thing I thought was, Oh my God, I'm a Twitter meme," she says of her breakout moment. "I was too scared to open my phone." She tried to stay in college in the months that followed, "but it became almost impossible," she says; it's tough to attend lab when Prada's inviting you to Paris. "I was just like, 'Okay, I need to take this chance,' " she says. "My parents were so upset."

Just four months after she was scouted, Yai walked her first runway show. Almost a decade later, she is one of her generation's leading models alongside Paloma Elsesser and Alex Consani, two of her closest friends.

"Anok is a star, not just because she is the most beautiful in the room, but

ON THE ANOK YAI COVER: HAIR PRODUCTS BY BUMBLE AND BUMBLE. MAKEUP PRODUCTS BY ARMANI BEAUTY. LASHES BY ELORA LANE. NAIL ENAMEL BY ESSIE. HAIR BY TIFFANY BLAKE. MAKEUP BY SHEIKA DALEY. MANICURE BY AJA WALTON. TAILOR, MAJORS. PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY BOOM PRODUCTIONS. FASHION EDITOR, NICOLE CHAPOTEAU. PHOTOGRAPHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR *VF* BY PHILIP-DANIEL DUCASSE IN BROOKLYN. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

because she knows how to command it," says Consani. "Anok is one of a kind," agrees Piccioli. "Not only is she a total pro and a very intelligent woman, but she also always brings something more to the table—her humanity." For Maximilian Davis, who leads Ferragamo, Yai is "one of the greatest models of our time."

Jawara Wauchope, the hairstylist known for his work with stars like Beyoncé and Rihanna, takes the praise a step further. "Anok Yai is the defining supermodel of this generation," he says. "Her belief in others, her resilience, and her commitment are a reminder that true supermodels are not defined by the images they create, but by the impact they leave on the people around them. She's just the truth."

When Yai first entered the industry, she remembers some people in fashion—stylists, designers, glam teams—speaking to her slowly, as if she would struggle to understand them. "I'm obviously South Sudanese. They assumed that I would have a really strong African accent," she says. "But then when I would talk. I sounded so New Hampshire, and they're like, 'Wait, what's going on?' " She laughs at the memory. "They're like, 'Oh, you speak really good English!' And I'm like, 'I'm from New Hampshire, babe!' "

Yai gets a lot of credit not only for her looks and her poise but her command of her own body. She doesn't get enough credit for her playful sense of humor—though she made me promise to underplay how funny she is for the purpose of this profile. ("Some things we keep for ourselves," she says.) She loves punny wordplay, and if you teasingly sing her a few bars from a Disney ballad, she'll gamely join in for the next verse. Even many style insiders don't know how smart she is: This is, after all, a woman who was once studying biochemistry.

The same tunnel vision and ambition that once led her to medicine pushed her toward a new goal. And as Yai's presence in fashion rose, she swiftly gained a fervent fandom. Some had found her through that breakout viral photo; others became fascinated with her walk, which has the kind of hypnotizing sway normally found only in the supermodels of yore, including Campbell and Yasmeen Ghauri. Yai approached her career strategically, she says. She spent one season walking as many shows as humanly possible and the next doing a selective few. She became a model's model, the same way Evangelista had done some 30 years earlier. While her generational counterparts bent to the whims of internet stardom or TikTok, Yai brought the industry to her feet by becoming the best at what she had set out to do.



EVERY HEART BEATS TRUE
Born in Egypt to South Sudanese parents and raised in New England, Anok Yai is an American original. Previous page: clothing by Dior; earrings by Tiffany & Co. Fashion Editor: Nicole Chapoteau.

Yai recalls having to explain to her parents what her modeling career could look like. "I was like, 'Mom, I booked Prada.' She's like, 'What is Prada?' " Yai says. They were not wealthy when she was young; despite her interest in the culture around fashion, luxury was not in their everyday vernacular. "My dad was like, 'You were supposed to be a doctor, what's going to happen?' " she says. "For a while they still didn't get it. And then one day my dad was driving, and then he saw my first Prada billboard and he was like, 'Oh my God, is that my daughter?' " Now her parents are her biggest supporters, posing with her for her most recent British *Vogue* cover story.

Though Yai is at the top of her game, only a year ago it seemed like she might never work again. In 2025, Yai learned that she had a congenital defect. Her heart was pumping too much blood into her lungs, and it was killing her left one. She underwent surgery, and after a complication, she went under the knife again. Her recovery was long and arduous. She had to learn to walk again, both as a human and as a model.

"I realized the fragility of my own mortality," Yai says. She clawed her way back, returning to work, and to the public eye, in March on the runway at Chanel in Paris. Then came the Met Gala, then came her *Vogue* cover, also in May, and her *Vanity Fair* cover in July, with the couture shows following the very same month.

In April, Yai had a cameo in *The Devil Wears Prada 2*. I had heard some industry gossip that she was in talks, or at least in the running, for a role in the film. "No comment," she says, laughing, when asked about it. When I probe and rephrase my question, she gives in. "I did a cameo," she says. "I would have done it as a character." She wanted to play one of *Runway*'s assistants. "But I can't tell all the secrets about what happened." She laughs again.

Yai will say that she's secretly been taking acting classes for the past few years. A pivot to the big or small screen would be an ambitious goal and a somersault of a transition few models before her have successfully accomplished. (Kaia Gerber is currently in the process; her mother, Cindy Crawford, never quite got there.) Yet Yai has surprised herself and those around her many times before. With her signature focus—and a little prayer on that rosary—who's to say she won't make it happen? VF

WE NOMINATE FOR OBLIVION

WEARABLE TECH

No more beeping, booping, or buzzing. HILLARY BUSIS is opting out



Once upon a time, nerds didn't *know* they were dressing like nerds, which actually made their ensembles kind of cool. But there is no way to look cool in wearable tech. Even AirPods. (Especially AirPods?)

Why, you ask? It's just all so ugly! Maybe this goes without saying, but let's say it anyway: From Fitbits and Apple Watches to Oura rings and the monstrosity that is the Oakley Meta Vanguard—wraparound specs that look like a castoff from a Jared Leto–starring *Tron* sequel—wearable devices are uniformly clunky and inelegant no matter how streamlined their design or modest their footprint. They're the 21st century's answer to a pocket protector and suspenders with none of the charm. Think of Mark Zuckerberg in a thick-framed pair of Meta glasses or Tim Cook wearing the Apple Vision Pro—the love child of the Patriot Act and a pair of ski goggles—on the cover of, yes, *Vanity Fair*. It's impossible to picture without wanting to stuff either one inside a locker.

True, the annals of fashion are littered with ill-advised accessories: leg warmers, trucker hats, Livestrong bracelets. But the very act of putting on a wearable—of willingly adorning oneself with a tiny computerized narc—is an act of surrender. By default, these devices mark the wearer not only as a geek, but as a try-hard and an egoist. Wearable tech is for people who can think of nothing more fascinating than the minutiae of their own body, people who can't simply take a stroll around the neighborhood unless it "counts" for something—unless it gives them points in an invisible competition they're playing against themselves.

Which, to be fair, is not entirely their fault. In many cases, the robot tail wags the living dog by tricking it—tricking us—into caring about obscure metrics, then gamifying the process of improving them. Two years ago I'd never even heard of a VO_2 max. But after a late-night deep dive into my health app revealed that I have one; that unbeknownst to me, my watch had been keeping tabs on it for years; and—horror of horrors—that mine was merely above average rather than high, optimizing this questionably important measure became a personal obsession.

I am a geek, and a try-hard, and an egoist. I'd love to throw my watch into the East River. But I can't, because I've grown accustomed to knowing how many imaginary flights of stairs I climbed yesterday (so many!) and just how deeply I slept last night (not very!). The watch hasn't transformed me into a monster, but it's enhanced my preexisting monstrous conditions: a thirst for validation, a need to be constantly graded and evaluated.

Things could be worse. I could be addicted instead to the pervert glasses manufactured by Google and Meta or the ones to come from Apple and Snap. Anecdotally, I've read that wearable computers like these are a godsend for people with visual impairment. This is good for them. But nobody else could possibly have a compelling reason to put on Meta glasses. These devices are morally questionable as well as aesthetically heinous; at least when dirtbags attempt to use their smartphones to take creepshots of strangers, it's possible to catch the attempted voyeurs in the act.

Computer glasses erase that prospect. They're the embodiment of Daniel Lavery's immortal evisceration of *Black Mirror:* "What if phones, but too much?"

We already live in a hall of black mirrors. Screens have invaded our taxis, our billboards, our children's toys, our very refrigerators. There's a "smart" version of everything from washing machines and light bulbs to window coverings and umbrellas. My grill has an app. Tech has crept into every facet of everyday life, like an invisible fog of ones and zeros. All that, *and* you need a leather belt with a tiny computer inside that tells you when you've eaten too much? Isn't that what a regular belt is supposed to do?

No more! If this is smart living, I'd rather be dumb. VF

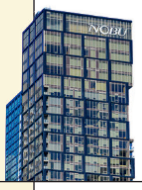
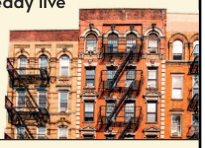
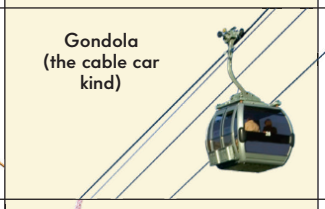
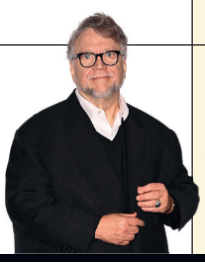
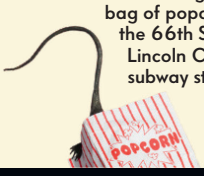
META GLASSES: MADISON VOELKEL/BFA.COM. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

ILLUSTRATOR **BEN GILES**

AWARDS SEASON

TO THE FILM FESTS YOU GO!

Each year, awards-season hopefuls make their grand debut in Italy's floating city, the breathtaking Rocky Mountains, New York City's bustling Upper West Side, and that city in Canada where everyone you know has threatened to move. If you could only hit one festival—or any—which would be your own cinematic Goldilocks? REBECCA FORD has the answer

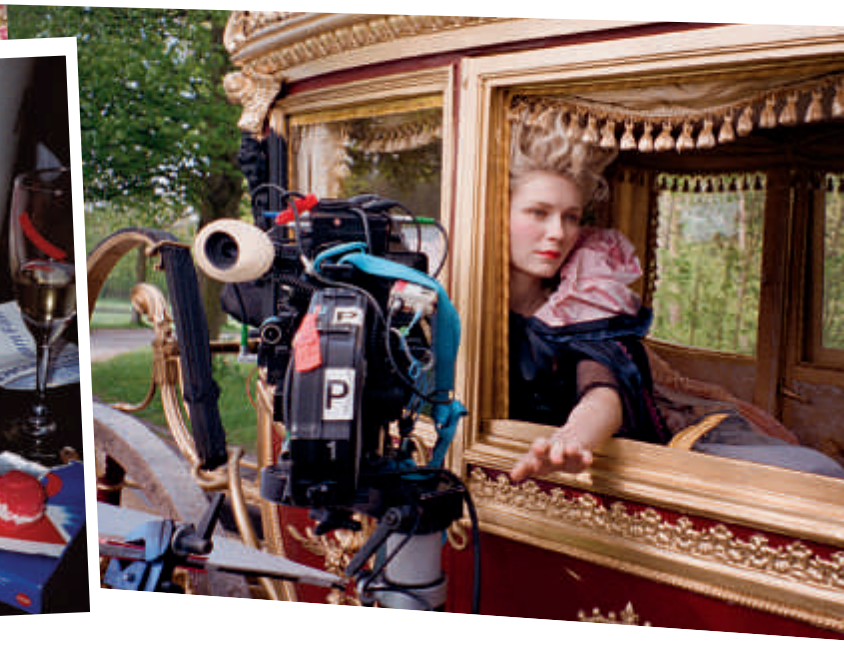
	VENICE SEPTEMBER 2–12	TELLURIDE SEPTEMBER 4–7	TORONTO SEPTEMBER 10–20	NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 25–OCTOBER 12
THE VIBE	 Old Hollywood glamour with a dash of la dolce vita	Sundance, but with good movies—and no lines 	Big, bold, and crowd-pleasing, like a Canadian tuxedo 	 Eyy, I'm watchin' a movie here!
WHERE YOU'RE STAYING	Hotel Cipriani: so bellissimo, you won't mind that it's an insanely long boat ride from the Lido 	The lodge your studio rented at a weekly rate equivalent to a Cartier Love necklace	 Nobu Hotel Toronto, which opened just last year and has the highest luxury guest rooms in the city (on the 45th floor)	The apartment where you already live 
TYPICAL LOGLINE	An Oscar-winning auteur presents a challenging and deeply personal drama featuring seven other Oscar winners (and one perennial nominee)	😭😭😭 Rising star debuts a career-defining work that leaves the audience in a puddle of tears	A rousing musical about artistic ambition or a twisted psychological drama, also about artistic ambition 	A true New Yorker confirms every New Yorker's firmly held belief that by living in New York, they're at the center of the universe
DEALMAKING HOT SPOT	Gondola (the boat kind) 	Gondola (the cable car kind) 	The often broken Scotiabank Theatre escalator  	Tatiana by Kwame Onwuachi, the impossible-to-get-into Lincoln Center restaurant 
GO-TO ACCESSORY	A Miu Miu raffia hat for sun protection 	Bear whistle and/or oxygen can 	The Criterion Closet Picks Director Series bag, both to prove your cinephile cred and to store the snacks you'll try to sneak past security at Roy Thomson Hall	Your favorite Richard Mille watch, which you can clandestinely check during hour three of a documentary about the concept of time
BEST PARTY	A private dinner at Corte Sconta 	The invite-only, off-the-record filmmaker welcome dinner held at a private residence—the sort of exclusive event insiders will describe as casual	Sony Pictures Classics' intimate annual sit-down dinner at Morton's The Steakhouse 	The opening-night fête at Tavern on the Green
LEAST SURPRISING CELEBRITY SIGHTING	Lady Gaga on a water taxi 	The festival's blond(e) queen and king: Kirsten Dunst and Jesse Plemons 	Beloved Toronto presence Guillermo del Toro 	A rat dragging a bag of popcorn into the 66th Street–Lincoln Center subway station 

TAXI, HOTEL CIPRIANI: ALAMY. *MOONLIGHT*: COURTESY OF EVERETT. TEAR EMOJI: COURTESY OF APPLE. HAT, TATIANA, TOTE: COURTESY OF THE BRANDS. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.









FILM

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Converse! Cake! Cigarettes! The legacy of Sofia Coppola's 18th-century period piece *Marie Antoinette* endures 20 years later. A new book by photographer Andrew Durham offers a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the making of the gilded film

With his Contax 35-mm camera in hand and unprecedented access to the Palace of Versailles, Andrew Durham shot more than 1,800 photographs on the set of his close friend and collaborator Sofia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette.* There's a particular photo of the titular teenage queen and her husband, King Louis XVI, resurrected with youthful dispositions by Kirsten Dunst and Jason Schwartzman, draped in French opulence—white powdered wigs, crown jewels, bosoms, and all—while sporting wired headphones and propping up an Apple laptop in the palatial halls of Versailles.

The image is a time warp, one that perfectly encapsulates how Coppola turned a period piece into a decadent coming-of-age story, complete with a $40 million budget, piles of pastel Ladurée macarons, towering arrangements of fresh flowers, a pair of baby blue Converse, and a poignantly punk new-romantic-era soundtrack. It's just one of hundreds of beautiful photographs in Durham's new book, *Making Marie Antoinette,* published by the director's own imprint, Important Flowers, and accompanied by a sprawling, star-studded oral history of the film by *Vogue* editor Keaton Bell.

Though the French queen never actually said "Let them eat cake," the volume evokes the same delicious directive. Dig in.

—DANIELA TIJERINA

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MACK.

VANITIES



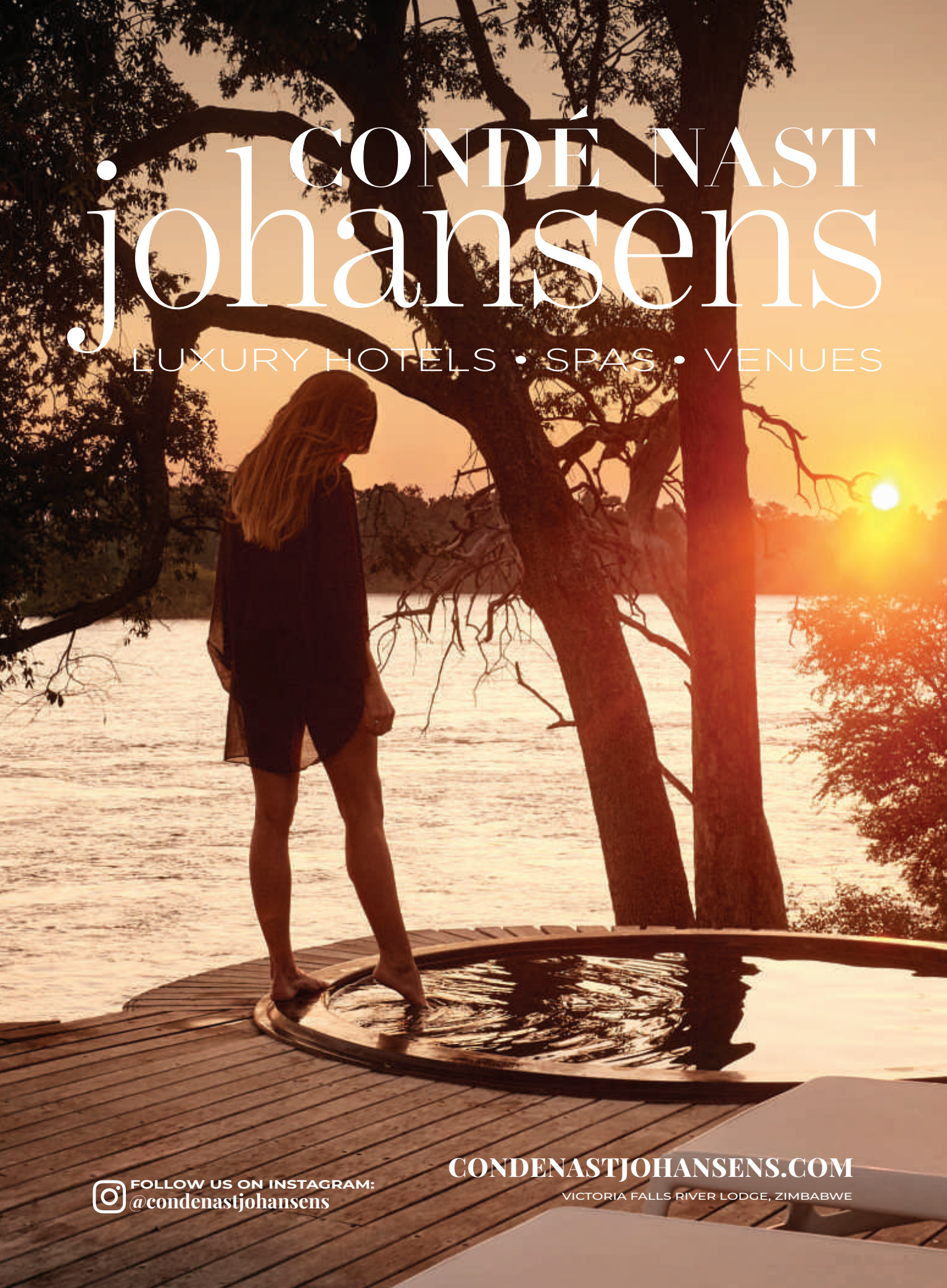








HOLLYWOOD ROYALTY
Clockwise from top left: Kirsten Dunst naps inside the Musée des Archives Nationales; an extra, Mathilde Favier, and Al Weaver on a cigarette break; Marie Antoinette's arrival at the Palace of Versailles; Odile Gilbert adjusting Dunst's wig in front of Sofia Coppola; sweets galore; Jason Schwartzman and Dunst at the Opéra National de Paris Palais Garnier; after hours at Le Baron nightclub; setting up a carriage shot; palace guards resting.


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DINING

FAMILY STYLE

The McNally name has given New York some of its all-time favorite restaurants. Can George McNally, 23, capture that magic with his new spot, Faux?



I feel like—so *not* cool," George McNally says. We're at a Chase Bank in Tribeca. Not the part with cobblestone streets, $20 million lofts, and boutiques that sell $500 Japanese denim jeans. The part east of West Broadway that bleeds into the grit of the Financial District, the skyscrapers so tall and the streets so narrow that sunlight doesn't reach much at all. We're standing under fluorescent lights in a room that smells of Lysol, near a teller behind plexiglass. No one would describe this as "cool."

The 23-year-old is hyperfocused on cool right now, because blocks away, he's making a restaurant called Faux. Why Faux? "I don't know," he says, hitting his vape. "During the build-out, there's a bunch of different elements in construction that are all like, faux this, faux that...."

He has a vision: an all-day restaurant serving food that's South of France–ish, like the kind you'd get on a perfect day in Saint-Tropez but not pretentious or too expensive. And it stays open late. "It's impossible to get food anywhere after 11, midnight," he laments of the city that supposedly doesn't sleep. Downstairs he's building a lounge where guests can linger. Right now the vision is still under construction. Which is why we are at the bank. To make something cool involves an uncool process of zoning permits, building codes, and cash withdrawals. "I have to be so boring about stuff right now," he says, stuffing a wad of bills into his wallet. Several black tattoos, including one of a cocktail glass, flex across his arms.

He may seem young to be opening a restaurant, yet most men his age are not a son of Keith McNally, the man who made Balthazar and Minetta Tavern, to name only two; they're not a nephew of Brian McNally, Keith's brother who did Indochine. The McNally family holds a deep lore in New York: Despite being English born and raised, they opened the very eateries that defined and inspired the city's downtown culture. Jay McInerney waxed poetic about The Odeon in *Bright Lights, Big City.* In the 1990s, *Sex and the City* dedicated an episode to Samantha and Carrie trying to get into a thinly veiled Balthazar. Can George own the Gen Z night?

While a "child of" in acting or modeling would send nepo baby accusations flying, the margins of the restaurant business are too tenuous for anyone to seem to care. As Anthony Bourdain wrote in *Kitchen Confidential:* "Never having had a Friday or Saturday night off, always working holidays, being busiest when the rest of the world is just getting out of work, makes for a sometimes peculiar worldview."

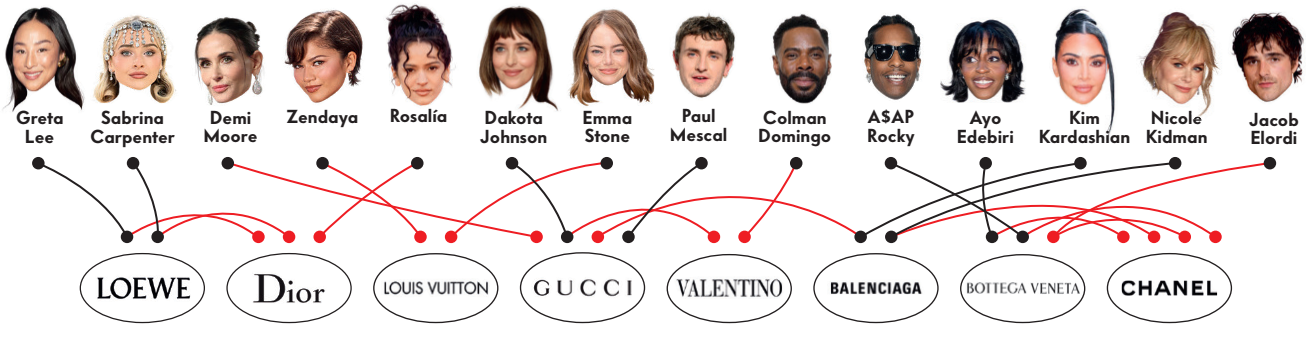
That worldview is the only one McNally has ever had, first as a child among the red leather booths of his father's restaurants, then as a teenager working in a London pub. A stint in nearly every position in the back and front of house followed: busser, dishwasher, waiter, bartender. The elder McNally wasn't sold when he saw the potential Faux space. George signed the lease anyway. He had no reservations.

—ELISE TAYLOR

PHOTOGRAPHER **IAN KENNETH BIRD**

DIPLOMATIC CORPS

As designers continue to play musical chairs—Jonathan Anderson from Loewe to Dior, Alessandro Michele arriving at Valentino from Gucci, and so on—their loyal ambassadors have followed. Most of them, anyway. See: Nicole Kidman joining designer Matthieu Blazy at Chanel after a stint with Demna at Balenciaga. Demna's tried-and-true muse, Kim Kardashian? She has been loyal, house after house. It can be hard to keep up with each passing season, so let's take a look at the current state of affairs



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STYLE

SHE'S ALL THAT

What exactly is an It girl? In the age of the influencer, it doesn't hurt to ask. According to Elinor Glyn, whose 1927 novella *It* popularized the term, "It" is a "quality possessed by some few persons which draws all others with its magnetic life force."

The following decades saw It girls minted by tastemakers: Andy Warhol had Edie, Capote had Babe, Diana Vreeland had Twiggy and Gloria Vanderbilt, and Alexander McQueen had Isabella Blow. Fast-forward to 2026, and they evade the algorithm. When everyone has her 15 minutes of fame, per Warhol's prophecy, what sets a woman apart? Mystique. There's always going to be something unknowable about an It girl even when everyone knows her name. Here, the traits over a century of Its.

—ELISE TAYLOR

EVERYTHING IT

IT WORKOUT
Tracy Anderson (still/again)

IT DIET
Microdosing GLP-1s

IT SHIRT
Charvet

IT GURU
Aman Shaman

IT MANICURE
Bare

IT ISLANDS
Hydra, Pantelleria, Minorca

IT MOUNTAINS
Dolomites

IT PLASTIC SURGERY
Ballerina boob job

IT WATER
Loonen

IT JEANS
Vintage Levi's (sourced by Denim by Orlee)

IT HOBBY
Substack

IT BAG
Matthieu Blazy's Chanel Maxi Flap Bag

IT INJECTION
Salmon sperm

IT HOTEL
Reschio

IT SUNGLASSES
Jacques Marie Mage

IT SPLURGE
Diane Keaton's estate auction

IT JEWELERS
Jessica McCormack, Dyne, Prounis

IT LEAF
Butter lettuce

IT HAMPTON
Amagansett

IT AUTHORS
Madeline Cash, John Steinbeck

IT SCANDAL
Divorce before 30

IT FEAR
Microplastics

IT DESIGN
A Lalanne (see page 96)

SHOE: CELINE. ALL OTHERS: GETTY.

THEN & NOW

THE FRONT ROW



THEN

THE OPINION LEADER
Newspaper and magazine writers, including Cathy Horyn and **Tim Blanks**

THE LENS
Anonymous runway-side photographers

THE TASTEMAKER
A magazine creative director, say, Grace Coddington or **André Leon Talley**

THE RUNWAY DISRUPTER
A huge celebrity showing up for fun, like when **Madonna** walked a Jean Paul Gaultier show practically topless

THE GATEKEEPER
Heritage brand owner **Bernard Arnault**

THE BIG SPENDER
The daughter of a royal or magnate, say, the Miller sisters, or Tatiana Santo Domingo and **Camilla Fayed**

THE IT GIRL
An heiress or aristocrat of nebulous provenance, like **Lee Radziwill** or São Schlumberger

THE CELEBRITY GUEST
The muse's plus-one, like when **Johnny Depp** sat front row at a John Galliano show starring his then girlfriend, Kate Moss

Before the internet upended the fashion ecosystem with its influencers and blogs and—*gasp!*—social media, the runway world operated under a strict hierarchy. Print publications, old money, and major celebrities dominated the front rows. They still do, but now, two decades and change after the millennium, they have to share the real estate with some new characters and their smartphones. The rise of content has given way to a changeover in the front row: It girls like Chloë Sevigny sit next to Insta-famous influencers; magazine creative directors rub elbows with celebrity stylists. And those heiresses and aristocrats and the wives of oil magnates who used to run the haute couture ateliers? They're in the waiting room with the plus-ones of tech moguls who've infiltrated the hallowed halls of good taste: Looking at you, Lauren Sánchez Bezos. —JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA



ILLUSTRATOR **ANDRÉ CARRILHO**

Radical Chic

As President Donald J. Trump puts his stamp all over Washington, ROBIN GIVHAN takes a look at the *look* of MAGA and how his disciples have hijacked style in their ascent to power

One of my favorite aspects of life in Washington, DC, has always been the ability to drive across town and spend a few hours in another country. Recently I was sitting behind the wheel of my car on one of the many stately but narrow residential streets abutting Woodley Park, waiting for the valet to wave me forward into Lebanon—or at least the residence of its ambassador. I watched as other guests strode up the walkway to the home of Her Excellency Nada Hamadeh Moawad, who was cohosting a luncheon in honor of Beirut-born fashion designer Reem Acra.

Inching forward, I scanned the group of women making their way inside the residence. The scene looked familiar and discomforting. Dresses dominated. Heels were high. The makeup was matte. Hair was expertly sprayed into place. MAGA was in the air. It was as if its concentrated form of femininity had pushed official Washington backward in time, as if an entire era of fashion never happened, as if decades of progress in the way women are expected to present themselves had evaporated. As if it was 1982, or even 1952. It was no surprise to hear one guest swoon over a recent encounter with President Donald J. Trump.

The MAGA aesthetic has seeped into all the nooks and crannies of the culture as well as here in diplomatic Washington. You could just as easily find the look on the runway in Ronkonkoma, New York, where, in the fall of 2024, conservative women came to admire red-white-and-blue-bedazzled jewelry and skirts depicting the drafting of the Declaration of Independence at the America First Patriotic Designer Showcase. At the January couture shows in Paris, the look was epitomized by Lauren Sánchez Bezos and her devotion to an hourglass silhouette and toe-crunching heels. In the press pool on Capitol Hill this spring, it was spotted on a reporter for LindellTV—the streaming site launched by Mike "the MyPillow Guy" Lindell. The reporter's on-the-job look for a contentious interview with Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) included a miniskirt, ankle-wrap heels, a blouse unbuttoned to the base of her sternum, and barrel curls.

MAGA is a style rooted in extremes. It is hostile to nuance and diversity. It views body positivity as a sign of weakness—but regards the president's puffy, aging body through an exceptionally kind lens. And it believes gender fluidity is something to be stamped out. "As of today, it will henceforth be the official policy of the United States government that there are only two genders: male and female," Trump said in his second inaugural address.

MAGA is code for hyperfemininity and extreme masculinity. It is women in stiletto heels and brightly colored, figure-hugging dresses—or high-waisted milkmaid ones. It is men in dark suits and red ties with a flag pin permanently affixed to their lapel (or in the case of Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, the American flag lining your suit jackets). MAGA women have long, *long* curled hair and flapping eyelashes; MAGA men clop about in black Florsheim shoes given to them by a president moonlighting as the nation's casting director and stylist.

Female MAGA faces are plumped and frozen into a lineless matte mask of misogynistic complicity. Male MAGA bodies are perma-flexed in a posture of overcompensation and possibly aided by testosterone injections.

The goal here is to keep people in their place, to keep them tethered to gender stereotypes, traditions, and a narrow version of history. It is an organizing principle, a way of placating those who might be uncomfortable with changing mores and shifting power structures or who are confused—or simply annoyed—by what is now acceptable behavior and what is harassment. If you are a MAGA believer, the aesthetic offers reassuring cultural guardrails. If you are a nonbeliever, the aesthetic is akin to an electrified fence sorting, separating, and punishing those who won't fall in line.

UPON REFLECTION
"MAGA keeps things simple in a complicated and confusing world. Girls wear pink. Boys wear blue. Everything else is noise," writes Robin Givhan.

MAGA exploits and exaggerates the dominant aesthetics of Washington in the years leading up to the current millennium. That Washington—with all its officiousness—was stuffy and predictable. Men sat at the top of the power pyramid, setting both policy and convention. It wasn't until 1993 that women even started wearing pants on the Senate floor, and it wasn't until 2017 that women in the House of Representatives were allowed to bare their arms. Women were made to feel that their bodies were somehow offensive, distracting, or inconvenient. Fashion rules provided order; they helped to maintain the status quo. Men, despite their dominance, didn't fare much better. Their job was to appear sturdy, brawny, and bland.

On Capitol Hill—and in Georgetown, its indomitable satellite—attire was a formulaic blend of achingly conservative silhouettes (think St. John Knits) and objectifying norms. Women wore luncheon suits, pantyhose, and high heels; they maintained full-face makeup, fresh blowouts, and salon sets. Men's style was rigorously prescribed too. They wore Brooks Brothers suits, and those suits were navy or charcoal or black. President Ronald Reagan dared wear brown suits, and he was declared fashion-forward. The suits weren't cut to heighten a man's physique but rather to comfortably camouflage it. A few men dabbled in bespoke, but it was hard to tell. They managed to make the most elite suiting look proletarian.

MAGA style has taken these familiar Washington constructs and added an element of performative pageant culture and tradwife religiosity—denoted by prominent

SOURCE PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES.



displays of Christian crosses. It mixes in aspects of toxic masculinity. And it wraps the entire cartoonish concoction in the high gloss of designer labels.

The glamour girls of beauty pageants of yore conflated prettiness with patriotism. Femininity was measured by how well one could traverse a stage in heels and a one-piece, and the ultimate dream was a diamanté tiara. MAGA links to tradwives who use modern-day social media to spread their olden-days gospel of homemade cheese, prairie dresses, and birthing abundant children while their manly men are out doing manly things. It uses the language of fashion-magazine spreads in which even the most mundane objects and activities are presented with a sense of indulgence and aspiration. While these America First adherents preach populism, their closets are full of Dolce & Gabbana, Christian Louboutin, Dior, and plenty of other boldface European names.

All of this spins out from the White House in a series of concentric circles. First lady Melania Trump sits at the center: her MAGA highness. She is the MAGA woman all others emulate. (The president is the man they all aim to please.) She maintains perfect posture atop her perilous Louboutin heels. Her eye makeup is smoky. The clothes are body-conscious—with the occasional nod to a floppy tradwife sleeve. Her smile is astutely attuned to the location of photographers. Her resting face is one of aggrievement. Mrs. Trump is the template for an aesthetic that has grown to be comical and terrifying, flattening and enraging, old-fashioned and foreboding.

Hervé Pierre is the man who has helped shape her public image. He was also the only male guest I spotted at that luncheon—and I'm pretty sure he was the only one wearing sneakers. He'd paired them with a white suit to which he'd affixed a little daisy to his lapel.

If you happened to see *Melania,* the cinematic ode to the first lady over which she had editorial control, you would have seen Pierre, who was prominently featured. In his most memorable scene, he ventures into the design weeds with Mrs. Trump as they discuss how many millimeters of her white collar should peek from the neckline of the Adam Lippes–designed coat she plans to wear to her husband's second swearing-in. Audiences learn Mrs. Trump considers every detail of her clothes not because she aims to lift up a particular design house or draw attention to a particular initiative, but because she cares deeply about her appearance. A good-looking first lady is a great first lady. In the MAGA-verse, style is substance. It's competence. It's policy. See: Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. riding a stationary bicycle barefoot, shirtless, and wearing jeans, inside a sauna with Kid Rock.

It only makes sense that this administration would complain about news photos it doesn't believe are flattering enough of their subjects. Officials have expressed enough displeasure with certain photos that they've been deleted from a wire service. They've banished offending photographers from Pentagon briefings because their pictures of Hegseth depicted him as human and not a Marvel character. Optics are a measure of success. If it *looks* good, then it *is* good.

MAGA STYLE IS A PERVERSION OF THE PAST, A FORM OF DRAG BORN OF LONGING, DISAFFECTION, UPHEAVAL, AND ANGER OVER WHAT DEMOCRACY HAS WROUGHT.

With its gendered stereotypes and racialized strictures, the image promoted by this administration and its loyalists is sending us spiraling back to a time when attractiveness, and by default worth, was measured in the narrowest, whitest terms. It's an exaggerated version of nostalgia and respectability.

The aesthetic hearkens to a time before transgender rights were part of the political conversation and before same-sex marriage was legalized across the United States. The country had not elected a Black president or even envisioned a Black first lady. The CROWN Act had not been adopted at the state level nor introduced at the federal one. A historic wave of women had not yet been elected to Congress.

It's a perversion of the past, a form of drag born of longing, disaffection, upheaval, and anger over what democracy has wrought.

Pierre, who is French, has been in Mrs. Trump's orbit since 2016. He is funny and blunt and in case anyone was wondering, he knows that some people are appalled every time they lay eyes on the president and first lady. He has taken this predisposed outrage as a challenge to do his job well.

Pierre met Mrs. Trump when he collaborated with her on her first inaugural gown. Now at the National Museum of American History, the vanilla silk crepe dress, with its single waterfall ruffle and narrow claret ribbon at the waist, hinted at old-world craft and restraint. It had an air of lightness too. It was feminine and a bit sexy thanks to its slit skirt.

Unlike Sarah Phillips and Michael Faircloth, designers who created dresses for, respectively, Hillary Clinton and Laura Bush and had connections to the cities the first ladies called home, Pierre did not have a long-standing relationship with Mrs. Trump. Pierre is also not the sort of designer whose biography builds a narrative of youthful entrepreneurship into the work, as Jason Wu's did when he created a gown for Michelle Obama. For Pierre, a dress is simply a dress—expertly fitted, well-made, and appropriately formal or informal depending upon the occasion.

Pierre's work and his eye make plain that no garment, no singular cut or color or embellishment, is distinctly MAGA. It's the combination of a multitude of elements. It's the way in which MAGA fills a void with a story, the way fashion is used as a weapon to belittle and divide and prioritize. This is a first lady, after all, who once departed the White House en route to a detention center for migrant children wearing a jacket that read, "I REALLY DON'T CARE, DO U?" She is a representative of an administration that has been at war with inclusivity, immigration, and nonwhite history. When espoused by Mrs. Trump, Pierre's devotion to old-world craft reads as a rebuke to new-world diversity. Formality has become an expression of cold callousness. For every designer—Lippes, Stefano Gabbana, Domenico Dolce—who happily and intentionally drapes their clothes on Mrs. Trump's back, one wonders: Do *you* care?

Over the years, the movement has taken banal expressions of sex appeal or professionalism— CONTINUED ON PAGE 122



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Sherman's March

Hedda Hopper. Elsa Maxwell. Cindy Adams. We've always had a love-hate relationship with our most celebrated purveyors of gossip. Lauren Sherman, author of *Line Sheet*, is the latest inheritor of the mantle. AIDAN McLAUGHLIN hits the shows with the journalist about whom everyone in fashion has an opinion

High above the Hotel Bel-Air, inside a pale yellow pavilion, Lauren Sherman sits quietly and watches as models glide by in leather riding boots and silk scarves. A parade of luxury executives, fashion journalists, and a few celebrities have been shuttled up the hills to be here just before golden hour. The man who owns the property, a prime three-acre tract with sweeping views of Los Angeles, whispers that Hermès spent millions of dollars to build this butter-hued extravaganza from scratch.

Sherman is sitting across from Kerry Washington and Miley Cyrus, who bounce in their seats and gossip giddily with one another. She keeps mostly to herself, occasionally filming a model with her iPhone or jotting down notes. "I would say my biggest weakness as a reporter is I do feel uncomfortable being in the way," she will later tell me.

Sherman continues scanning the crowd. "Shows are a great place to see power dynamics shifting," she says. She

HAIR, SÉBASTIEN LE CORROLLER; MAKEUP, TIINA ROIVAINEN. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

PHOTOGRAPHER **JONAS UNGER**

points out that a specific Hermès executive who would normally languish in the second row of a show like this is now ringside. "That's how I know he's moving up in the world." She pays close attention when Nadège Vanhée, artistic director of Hermès womenswear, pauses her sprint down the runway to hug OpenAI executive Charles Porch.

The next morning, in *Line Sheet,* the sharp-edged fashion-industry newsletter she writes for *Puck,* Sherman dutifully sizes up the collection. But it's her bloodless assessments of the shifting fortunes of fashion's creative stars—and even their lowliest subordinates—that keep readers hooked. Sherman is known to savage, with unglamorous insensitivity, the vaunted creative directors of the great houses. Hermès is off the hook today. Vanhée's embrace with Porch, Sherman writes, demonstrates her "sprawling, unexpected network of friends." The headline of Sherman's column declares, fortuitously for Vanhée, that the 10-year veteran of Hermès has "increasing allure."

Sherman, 44, is not a critic in the style of *New York Times* writer Vanessa Friedman, nor is she trying to be. "No one cares what she has to say about the clothes," says one fashion editor. What she offers is a blend of provocative industry analysis, who's-up-and-who's-down speculation, and bona fide scoops. This mix, delivered with an insider's voice and tart-tongued certainty, has made Sherman one of the most influential—and polarizing—figures in fashion media. In just three years she has transformed *Line Sheet* into the second most profitable franchise at *Puck,* complete with a four-person reporting team, podcast, events business, and audience that stretches from luxury conglomerate executives to editors, designers, investors, publicists, and fashion obsessives.

Fashion magazines, with few exceptions, are known to offer flattering coverage of the industry—if they criticize, it's by omission. At *Line Sheet,* Sherman is disrupting a hidebound industry with an old-school playbook: lavishing praise on some, drubbing others, and allowing vendettas to play out inside the confines of her newsletter, printing rumors that may or may not become fact. Her readership has never seen anything like it.

That audience has helped Sherman break major news. Last year she was first to report Chloe Malle's appointment to run American *Vogue;* more recently, she reported a week before the official announcement that *New York* magazine creative director Jody Quon "was in the process of working out her deal" to be the next editor in chief of *T,* the style magazine of *The New York Times.* Before that, she broke the long-awaited news of Chanel's pick of Matthieu Blazy as its new artistic director.

Sherman is keenly aware of her own power—and bullishly confident in it. "Mark is smart to assign this story," she tells me at the Hermès show in June, referring to my boss, *Vanity Fair*'s editor Mark Guiducci, and suggesting he believes a flattering profile will earn *Vanity Fair* gentler coverage in *Line Sheet.* She shrewdly praises editors who have nurtured relationships with her, like Sara Moonves, the editor in chief of *W* magazine. "She's such an influential voice in our industry," Moonves later writes in an email.

"Honestly, I think people are afraid of me," Sherman says. She pauses to offer a caveat: "I'm not a bully." But she does inspire fear. "When I see my name in the opening blurb, I get a jolt of anxiety every time," says one fashion executive who's a recurring comprimario in Sherman's emailed opera. Chris Black, the writer and podcaster, compares the power of *Line Sheet* to "the way that you'd want to see your name in bold in *Page Six* in the '90s. For better or worse, if you're in it, you're part of the conversation."

"YOU KNOW WHAT?" SHERMAN SAYS. "I DO THINK I KNOW BETTER THAN EVERYONE ELSE."

Sherman's audience is obsessive. One fashion editor recalls receiving "hundreds" of texts when *Line Sheet* broke the news of her new job. Subjects of her newsletter say she often reports news about their companies before they even know about it. "I don't know how she knows these things sometimes," says the executive. "She is the only journalist that I will call to actively do due diligence on a company that we are looking at," says a venture capitalist who works with fashion businesses. "I trust her nose. I trust her intel."

"She's built up *Puck* to be inevitable in fashion," says a competing fashion journalist. "You can't *not* read it."

It's a fine time to cover fashion, if not to work in it, which has been central to *Line Sheet*'s success. In the last few years, the $2.5 trillion industry has been in a state of near-constant turnover. Chanel, Gucci, Valentino, Loewe, Celine, Tom Ford, Dries Van Noten, and Maison Margiela have cycled through creative-leadership changes. These luxury houses increasingly resemble sports franchises, with star designers traded, poached, and recruited across warring corporate empires. Sherman has whipped the turmoil into an arresting drama. Last year, amid a blizzard of hirings and sackings at the upper level of the major houses, a group of top designers maintained a WhatsApp group chat dedicated to complaining about Sherman's coverage of their fates.

"I don't really care about clothes," says Black. "I don't care about fucking construction. These personalities and why they do what they do and how much they're getting paid and where they're going and why and who's getting replaced—Lauren has made that a full reality show."

Working outside the glossy magazines allows for certain liberties. There has long been a tacit complicity between the houses and the magazines that cover them, which means that most fashion reporters respect embargoes—the agreements between a company and an outlet stating a piece of news can't be published until it is officially announced. Sherman, liberated by her own ambition but also her platform at *Puck,* which is seen as less beholden to luxury advertisers, pays no mind to such agreements. "I think that anyone who sends a thing that says 'embargoed' is stupid," she says. "There's no way I would ever honor that. It's insane. Why do people do that?" (A source at *Puck* says the outlet "regularly agrees to and adheres to news embargoes.")

It also means she can cover the word on the high street more liberally than the competition. "A more mainstream newspaper has to be very careful about rumors, but she has the freedom to write about things

AROUND AND AROUND SHE GOES
Lauren Sherman, known for her direct hits on fashion's sacred cows, poses here with the horses of the Carrousel de Saint-Pierre in Paris.

that aren't 100 percent confirmed but often become correct," says the curator and art dealer Jeffrey Deitch, a devoted *Line Sheet* reader. "It makes for much more interesting reading." Sherman often ends speculative columns about swirling gossip with casual entreaties: "Anyway, if you know more, call me about this, too!"

Her approach has made for a polarizing rise. Sherman has made enemies at the highest levels of fashion's major conglomerates and among the press she both covers and competes with. "The *Puck* approach in general is they hear a rumor and they write it," says one fashion journalist. "Often they frame it as 'We have special inside info.' It drives everyone nuts because everyone has the inside info. Everyone's heard that rumor, but it's a rumor and other institutions have different rules around what you can print. They essentially play the odds. Write a rumor, and if it's right, then we get to be the ones who broke it. If it's wrong, then it doesn't matter because everyone will have forgotten and there's new news anyway. It's a pretty good roulette game."

"Our journalists are deeply sourced in the industries they cover," says *Puck* cofounder Jon Kelly (who was once an editor at *Vanity Fair*), calling Sherman a "best-in-class, once-in-a-generation journalistic talent." "As a result, we've cultivated a loyal audience of readers that turn to us for reporting they can't find anywhere else."

In the image-obsessed world of fashion, hostility manifests in peculiar ways. Some cattily point out that Sherman doesn't have the clearest sense of personal style. One friend of Sherman's says that's improved with the success of *Line Sheet:* "Lauren now clearly makes a lot of money and wears that money." At the Hermès show, she wore Versace shoes by Dario Vitale and a Phoebe Philo–era Chloé jacket bought on The RealReal for $125. On her wrist she wears a Cartier Panthère watch. She could expect to face some knives given the way she wields her pen. Paris, where Sherman recently moved her family in order to be closer to the action, is a tough town—and Sherman isn't the most natural fit. She sometimes pronounces the first name of Blazy as "Match-yoo" instead of "Ma-tyeuh."

"There are people who hate her," says Parisian PR chief Lucien Pagès. "She makes people nervous—those who compete for scoops and also those who have something to hide. She can make me nervous!" The angst *Line Sheet* inspires is part of the appeal for its readers. "If you don't have enemies, you're not doing the job right," says Black.

Sherman admits she can be subjective and play favorites. "That's the thing that drives me nuts more than anything," she says. "If you'd ask Cathy Horyn, I think she would probably say no, but she totally does. We all know who she loves, who she's been on vacation with. This is a *New York Times* reporter who's going on vacation with Karl Lagerfeld. I'm not going on vacation with these people." ("Lauren is mistaken," says Horyn, who now serves as fashion critic-at-large at *The Cut.* "I don't believe Lagerfeld ever went on vacations.")

The mercurial nature of Sherman's coverage can inspire insecurity in her subjects. "Her opinion is capable of evolving," says Stella Bugbee, the Styles editor of *The New York Times* who has known Sherman since 2013. "One day she'll be like, 'I love that person.' And then she'll call them out if she doesn't like something they did. I think that's probably why people fear her." In person, Sherman is equally keen to deliver such verdicts, whether on the niche menswear newsletter *Blackbird Spyplane*—"That guy takes himself too seriously"—or the illustrations that accompany *Puck* writer bylines: "You can be on the record that I don't like the stupid sketches."

"ANYONE WHO SENDS A THING THAT SAYS 'EMBARGOED' IS STUPID," SHE SAYS. "THERE'S NO WAY I WOULD EVER HONOR THAT. IT'S INSANE. WHY DO PEOPLE DO THAT?" (A SOURCE AT *PUCK* SAYS THE OUTLET "REGULARLY AGREES TO AND ADHERES TO NEWS EMBARGOES.")

This is all in keeping with the well-honed style of *Puck:* sweeping declarations delivered with either real or feigned institutional omniscience. In one newsletter on the promotion of an editor at *The Wall Street Journal,* Sherman managed to cram both self-congratulation and a spritz of venom into one sentence: "Sarah Ball, editor of *WSJ* magazine, is a master of managing up, and this week she pulled off a maneuver that was long expected—at least by me." When I ask Sherman about *Puck*'s reputation for being impressed with itself, she replies: "You know what? I do think I know better than everyone else. I mean, no, I don't really. But we talk the way everybody talks behind the scenes. We're trying to say the quiet thing out loud."

Sherman is sensitive to the notion that she's made enemies. "It's hard for me too," she says. "I don't like people to not like me. It's not fun. And it often feels not right. There are certain people, I get why they don't like me, but not everyone." But she's defiant in the face of the frosty treatment she gets from some of the houses she covers. "I'm sort of the sacrificial lamb for everyone who's going to come next. I'm making it much harder for myself so that other people can cover this industry pretty honestly. And the thing is, this is not the first time I've not been invited to fashion shows."

Born in Trenton, Michigan, to parents who met working at a denim store, Sherman was raised in Pittsburgh, a world away from fashion's capitals. Her parents didn't have much money but cared deeply about style, and she longed for New York from when she was old enough to read *Sassy* magazine. By her teenage years she had settled on a plan: "Move to New York and cover Fashion Week in Paris and live in a shoebox and have a Chanel bag." Other experiences fueled her ambition. "I was friends with these mean girls in high school," she recalls, "and one of them was like, 'Lauren is so lucky. Everything she wants ends up happening.' Which is true. And another girl was like, 'She's not lucky. She's fat and she's poor.' And I'll never forget it. It's kind of like fuel."

After college and a brief stint in London, she moved to New York and took a series of jobs at *Forbes, Fashionista, Lucky,* and eventually *Business of Fashion,* where she served as chief correspondent and built a bursting rolodex. By that point, Sherman and her family had moved to Los Angeles, where she soon grew restless. She had become "completely obsessed" with Matthew Belloni's enormously influential Hollywood



THE PUNISHER
Sherman's headlines are faithful to *Puck* house style: admirably effortful puns that announce the news of the day. Pick your favorite.

ARNAULT: LUDOVIC MARIN/AFP. ANDERSON: PETER WHITE. BOTH: GETTY IMAGES. SHERMAN: BECKY MALINSKY.

newsletter at *Puck* and considered covering the entertainment business herself. Whatever she did, she wanted to work at *Puck.* "From the beginning you could tell she was going to make a mark, and she didn't really care whether or not that would be in legacy media," says Bugbee.

Sherman was on leave writing *Selling Sexy,* her 2024 book about Victoria's Secret cowritten with *The Cut* writer Chantal Fernandez, when she reached out to a friend who worked at *Puck* to pitch herself. "I don't care, I'll write about Walmart," she recalls saying. "If you guys are going to do fashion or retail or anything, I need to be in the conversation." It turned out Kelly was looking around for a fashion writer. "It was immediately clear, within 15 minutes, that Lauren had all the things you could possibly look for and more," he says. "Forty-five minutes in, I stopped her. I said, 'You're hired. We're going to do this.' I had never done that before, and I've never done it since."

When *Puck* announced Sherman as its new fashion writer, the outlet crowned her "the preeminent fashion journalist of her generation," an honorific that raised eyebrows in a competitive industry. "We were all like, that is insane," recalls one fashion journalist. But *Puck*'s inflated branding has, over time, come to look almost prophetic. "The joke is on us because it's kind of become true in a certain way."

As *Line Sheet*'s audience grew, Sherman launched a private-dinner series spanning cities from Los Angeles to Milan and landed a contributor deal at CBS News. Sherman joined the network in January, alongside a raft of new contributors recruited by its new editor in chief, Bari Weiss. She sighs when I ask about the network. "I would say that I'm—I'm watching the way it develops and we'll see, but for now I've had a good experience," she says. And then, "It seemed like a great idea when I did it—and so far it's been a good experience."

Earlier this year Sherman and her husband, the fellow journalist and media founder Dan Frommer, moved from Los Angeles to the east side of Paris and enrolled their five-year-old son in a bilingual Montessori school. "The business is concentrated in Europe now," she says. "There aren't many companies in the US that I cover other than Nike and Skims. So why not be here?"

In 2024, the *Financial Times* reported that LVMH chairman Bernard Arnault had sent a furious memo to staff ordering an "absolute ban" on speaking with journalists at several publications. There was only one US outlet on the list: *Puck.* "I formally condemn any behaviour consistent with maintaining relationships with unscrupulous journalists and giving them information or comments on the life of the group," Arnault wrote. "Any breach (and this will inevitably be known) will be considered a serious infraction, with the corresponding consequences attached to it."

Sherman says the order from the head of the world's biggest luxury group didn't hurt her business: "The relationships I have are the relationships I have."

She may not receive the warmest welcome at Louis Vuitton shows, but *Line Sheet* still ferrets out scoops from inside Arnault's heavily guarded fortress. "Clearly people are telling her information," says Max Stein, a manager and longtime friend of Sherman's. "And those are the exact same people that are complaining that she has the information." Even Sherman's critics agree she still has the ear of many, including the money people. "A lot of the people who don't like stories that she's written still speak to her very regularly," says the venture capitalist. "Lauren is focused on uncovering elements of businesses that a lot of people don't want written about."

Sherman has been a thorn in the side of Condé Nast, the parent company of *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue,* which she covers with the same dramatic zeal as the memoirists who dissected the court of Versailles. She's similarly prone to inserting a sharpened epithet when a milder one may have sufficed. Malle, in the story announcing her appointment to the top of American *Vogue,* was deemed "a longtime supplicant" of Anna Wintour. A *Vogue* staffer who decamped to *The Wall Street Journal* is described as a "longtime Anna Wintour lackey," only for Sherman to clarify in the next line: "I say 'lackey' with affection." *Lackey,* in Shermanese, apparently means "an integral part of the *Vogue* machine." Guiducci has also been labeled a lackey in *Line Sheet.* [Editor's note: CONTINUED ON PAGE 123

How I Blew Up—Then Rebuilt—My Life

When news of her affair with Gavin Newsom exploded into the public eye, it was only the outward mark of a long-rippling private implosion. In the wreckage, RUBY RIPPEY faced her demons but lost the person she loved most and her own voice. Twenty years later, she is ready to share her story

I have a friend in recovery who says her family was blindsided when she got sober. No one had any idea; she'd hidden it well. That wasn't my story. When I entered rehab, no one was shocked, only relieved. My drinking had stopped being private some time ago.

Nobody had been surprised when rumors about my affair surfaced long before treatment. Nearly everyone seemed to know except the one person who most needed to know: my husband. I had been sleeping with his boss, who was also mine, and the mayor of San Francisco. I had believed that getting sober would put my life back together. Instead, it left me alone with the truth.

In rehab, when the question of telling my husband comes up, my therapist leans forward—jet black hair, dark eyeliner—and delivers the recommendation of the care team. "We think it's best for your sobriety not to tell him. Because this involves a public figure, the fallout could be devastating, and it could threaten your recovery."

Her verdict doesn't sit right with me. Even then, I know telling Alex is necessary.

Once home from rehab, I abandon structured recovery and try to do sobriety on my own. For months I stay dry while each day my husband goes to work for the man who had been sleeping with his wife. The silence begins to feel almost criminal.

MIXTAPE—1999

I first meet Alex at San Francisco City Hall during Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr.'s administration. I am the mayor's lead scheduler; Alex directs the Office of Neighborhood Services.

For months, he finds reasons to stop by my office. A coworker tells me he's asked about me. I say I'm not interested. Still, he keeps coming by. One afternoon he brings matzo ball soup from Max's deli, my favorite. Another time, a mixtape.

One afternoon I am eating a salad at my desk when he walks in and sits down across from me. I look up and meet his eyes—large, brown, steady—and something shifts. I see him differently. Or perhaps I allow myself to see what was there all along. He carries himself with an effortless assurance. There is gravity to him.

On New Year's Eve, as time clicks to 2000, we kiss for the first time on a friend's back porch. We are pressed against the wall as midnight erupts across the city. Fireworks, car horns, the collective exhale of a century ending. It feels like a beginning. After that night, I play the mixtape on repeat.

THE SUPERVISOR—2003

As Brown terms out, my new husband and I are recruited to join the next mayoral campaign. A young supervisor from District Two enters the race, often described as Kennedy-esque. Alex is field director; I am deputy finance director.

We move through those months side by side, through my pregnancy, through long stretches when victory feels uncertain. When our candidate wins with 53 percent of the vote, we walk into City Hall together. We are convinced we are building something new.

BENEATH THE DOME—2004

A year into the administration, the city still carrying the energy of a political dawn—a mayor whose charisma seems to gather momentum.

Just a month after taking office, he legalizes same-sex marriage. When it happens, I am seven months pregnant. I stand beneath the dome of City Hall in a maternity wrap dress and leopard kitten heels, deputized to marry couples.

The administration is settling into itself. I serve as commission secretary, coordinating appointments to nearly a hundred city boards and commissions. Down the hall is my husband's office—the deputy chief of staff. Some mornings I bring him two hard-boiled eggs in a Tupperware container. He looks up from his desk and smiles at me.

One day I am told my office has been reassigned. The mayor wants me at the desk outside his door, a gatekeeper. I understand the logic. It's a new administration full of young staffers improvising their way through it. Still, losing my office feels like a demotion.

But my new desk quickly becomes a nerve center. I manage the steady stream of people who want something from him, and I pass notes on thick yellow index cards, a holdover from Brown.

One night, we all meet at a Mexican restaurant on Lombard Street. Warm tortilla chips. Limes. Margaritas sweating in glasses. As the waiter takes orders, I feel the mayor looking at me. I glance up—across the table—back at him. As if caught off guard, he reacts, pointing at me.

"Hey—you look really good," he says. "You've lost all your pregnancy weight." There's an awkward laugh. I reach for another chip and stare at my husband's margarita, the salt rim catching the light.

I want it.

But I'm in another self-enforced stretch of sobriety, so I sit on my hands and wait it out.

After that, I start paying closer attention to what I wear. Chanel makeup. A yellow silk dress fitted at the waist. Pink patent leather heels. At senior staff meetings, we sit in a semicircle facing his enormous oak desk, 12-foot velvet curtains drawn tight, casting the room in a private glow. I wear my new heels. A tight pencil skirt. I cross my legs; I feel important.

It's hard to reconcile that woman with the person I would become in one short year. My



self-willed stints of sobriety grow fewer and farther between. Until they stop altogether.

THE WHITE DRESS— JULY 2, 2005

If there's a place it starts, it's at an afternoon wedding over Fourth of July weekend. A longtime City Hall staffer is getting married. Everyone is going. I wear a white strapless dress; my mother says it isn't appropriate for a wedding. She urges me to wear a tan wide-brimmed hat to add color, but I leave it in the car.

SHATTERED PIECES
"It isn't love. It isn't romance. It's intoxication," Ruby Rippey writes of the affair.

The reception is at a Napa Valley estate, surrounded by vineyards. Long tables sit in the afternoon sun. Alex and I stand with a group of staffers—talking, laughing, Champagne in hand. I am restless in a way I can't name. I drink Champagne, then wine. Then more wine. My dinner goes untouched.

My boss and I end up in the narrow hallway outside the bathroom at the same

ILLUSTRATOR **MICHELLE THOMPSON**

time. We wait, across from each other. The space is tight. The silence stretches. He slips his hands into his tan trouser pockets and smiles—his usual shy, aw-shucks smile. I say nothing. I hold his gaze longer than I should.

The air changes.

By the time night falls, I am sitting on the edge of a hot tub with my feet in the water. He is across from me, slipping off his shoes and socks, rolling up his pant legs. My husband leaves soon after, irritated that I want to keep partying while he drives home to our one-year-old son.

The next clear memory is getting into the back of my boss's chauffeured town car, heading to The Carneros Inn. There are others—his sister, a few more. The car smells like new leather. I stretch my legs across the center console and let my heels fall off. He is in the front seat. He takes one of my feet and begins to massage it, the gesture half-hidden inside the loud car.

Then nothing.

I wake the next morning beside him, still dressed. I am cold, almost shivering, and my dress—the one my mother warned me not to wear—is soaked from the waist down. I had passed out. I had also wet the bed. (It wasn't the first time.)

He is still asleep. I find my clutch, gather my heels, and leave quickly, wanting to get back to Alex.

A few days later, back at work, my boss slips my gold bracelet onto my desk as he passes. A gift from my grandmother, left behind in the Napa hotel room. He keeps walking. We pretend nothing has changed.

But everything has.

The boundaries begin to disintegrate. I linger in doorways, position myself within his sight line. At events, he holds the doors, waiting for me to pass first. The texts shift from work to something else. I manufacture reasons to be near him. The choreography becomes obvious. People notice.

As the performance unfolds in plain sight, I start measuring my days by how close it is to five—when I can start drinking. I scan his calendar for openings, places I might "happen" to see him later that night. I arrive, make sure I'm seen, then leave.

My phone lights up soon after. "Where are you?" But it never matters where I am because I always go to him—his penthouse in Russian Hill, a private back room in a North Beach bar, the W Hotel in Los Angeles.

We meet and we drink. There is sex, but it isn't the point. The point is proximity—to power, to being chosen, to feeling newly visible—no longer muted by pregnancy, by new motherhood, by the strain of white-knuckling long stretches of sobriety.

It isn't love. It isn't romance. It's intoxication. The text message is a hit. The glance across the hallway, a hit. The risk floods my bloodstream. I walk down the corridors of City Hall—my nude stilettos striking the marble floor. He looks at me, his gaze deliberate, newly curious. It feels like oxygen.

I don't stop to consider the consequences—not for Alex, not for myself, not for the life I am building. I am responding to the feeling. His attention lands like a high, and I follow it with a single-minded devotion.

THE STAIN

When I ride with him to his penthouse in Russian Hill, the driver is told to wait. I protest. But in the early hours of the morning, when I make my way back onto the sidewalk, the black Lincoln is still there, idling at the curb. I slide into the back seat, thanking the driver too profusely, humiliated by the certainty that he knows.

One night at his place, I am in his king-size bed, lying on my side, watching him. He is on all fours near the edge of the bed, scrubbing furiously at the carpet with a washcloth. I've knocked over a glass of red wine. It blooms across the pale rug. I remember thinking: That stain isn't coming out. As if he can hear me, he looks up, frustrated. "You know, we really can't do this anymore. You can't be doing this to Alex."

BY MORNING, MY FACE IS ABOVE THE FOLD IN EVERY LOCAL NEWSPAPER. TELEVISION STATIONS RUN THE STORY ON A LOOP. THE MAYOR HOLDS A PRESS CONFERENCE LIVE ON TV. "EVERYTHING YOU'VE HEARD AND READ IS TRUE," HE SAYS.

Later, alone in the back seat of his chauffeured car, I feel a sense of relief. It reminds me of my second DUI, over a decade ago—before Alex, before City Hall. Red and blue lights flashing in my rearview mirror as I came off the Golden Gate Bridge. I remember thinking, Maybe now it's over.

But the encounters continue, on and off, for months. I come home at three in the morning, wasted, breath thick with alcohol, and slide into bed beside my sleeping husband, pressing my cold body against his for warmth. The familiar fear floods in.

Some mornings I lie in bed, hungover and hurting, and plead with Alex: *Please don't let me drink tonight.* It's an impossible request. He can't control it any more than I can. "Can't you just stick to two glasses of Chardonnay?" he asks.

I love him for his stubborn refusal to see the full ruin of me, his belief that moderation is a skill I might someday learn. I love the version of myself reflected in his eyes.

TINY BUTTONS

I plan a girls trip to Los Angeles, knowing he will be there for work. By two in the afternoon my friend and I are drinking chilled Chardonnay at the Maison 140 pool in Beverly Hills. My phone buzzes. He's at the W Hotel. "You guys should come by." We polish off our wine and head over.

At the hotel bar, I remember only flashes—leaning in too close, laughter pitched too high. Then it goes black.

I wake beside him the next morning. The room is quiet. My head pounds. On the floor near the bed are tiny shirt buttons scattered like coins. Not mine. One is stuck to the back of my thigh. I peel it off and dress carefully, leaving without waking him.

Back at my hotel, I tell my friend I need to cut the trip short. I invent something about my son and book the first flight home. On the plane, with an empty seat beside me, I cry for the first time—a steady, stunned grief. I am overcome with the understanding that the consequences will not end with me. They may cost me the best thing that has ever happened to me: Alex. But worse, they will fall hardest on him—the person who least deserves them.

When I land, my phone lights up: "Thank God the W had T-shirts." Only then do I understand—hazily—that I tore his shirt off, every button ripped loose.

By now, the version of myself manning the nerve center is collapsing. I am now working in a makeshift office that used to be a copy room. I am coming in late, hungover most days. Leaving early, thinking only about drinking.



HAIR PRODUCTS BY KENRA PROFESSIONAL; MAKEUP PRODUCTS BY CHARLOTTE TILBURY; HAIR AND MAKEUP, LEE STEWART. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

THE PILL

As my drinking and my life begin to spiral, I turn to Antabuse, a pill that promises to make me ill if I drink. Each morning I swallow it, certain this will be the day I hold the line. By late afternoon, my resolve thins, and I begin bargaining with a future version of myself.

One night I make it until 7:30. At a private party, trays of Chardonnay circle the room. I watch them pass as if they are carrying relief. I take one. Then another. Within minutes, my face turns red and swells. My eyelids become slits. People stare. "Ruby, your face—what happened?" I wave a hand. *It's just the lights. They're so bright.*

The pill makes me ill. But it doesn't make me stop—it just makes me stop taking it.

So I turn to cocaine.

Alone, cocaine doesn't appeal much to me. But after one or two bottles of wine, it makes it so I can drink twice as much for twice as long.

The nights blur: rooftop bars, wine, cigarettes, and names I immediately forget. Strangers' living rooms. Finishing the last lines long after I stop wanting them. The taxi ride home as the sun comes up. The city already moving—belonging to people who have slept. My body, a crime scene.

A LONG SILENCE
Rippey writes that Kamala Harris advised her to pause before speaking out: "More time will give you better perspective."

People ask how Alex didn't know—why he didn't ask questions when I was stumbling home at three in the morning. My sister, who witnessed my deterioration up close, says that Alex and I were both having an affair with the mayor. He was so devoted to his job—and boss—that he chose not to see what was happening in front of him.

By now, my single-minded devotion has shifted: The drink and drug have taken its place. I move from bar to bar, staying out until dawn with people who don't ask questions. When his texts light up my phone—urgent, insistent—I feel nothing.

My sister begins trailing me at night, trying to keep me in sight. One morning, just after five, she drives me to the emergency room. My nose won't stop bleeding—again. I press an old T-shirt against my face and watch it darken. My jeans hang loose. Her hands tighten on the steering wheel.

The doctor cauterizes the inside of my nostril. The smell of something burning—metallic, bitter—fills the small exam room. On the drive home, as the sky begins to lighten, my sister tells me she's spoken with our father. I stare out the window. She says, "He'll pay for rehab—if you'll go."

The sentence lands harder than anything I did all night. Until then, I had believed this was a private failing, a defect in discipline. I had been trying to hold together a job, a marriage, a baby, and an affair while drinking and using cocaine. For the first time, stopping felt possible. I look at her and say: Okay.

WICKENBURG—MAY 19, 2006

The next morning, I fly to Arizona and check into a treatment center. I stay for seven weeks.

While there, I write two letters to my boss: one official, one CONTINUED ON PAGE 120

PHOTOGRAPHER **RYAN PFLUGER**

The Queen of Jordan

Jordan Roth began public life as a real estate scion turned Tony-winning Broadway impresario. More recently, he has embarked on a number of new pursuits in quick succession: haute couture customer, Instagram exhibitionist, performance artist, and now, with Ryan Murphy's blessing, bona fide Hollywood actor. MARISA MELTZER asks: How did this producer become the production?

There is a swarm of people gathered in Jordan Roth's studio for a couture fitting. It's hard to say exactly how many because new ones keep streaming in and out, carrying boxes of shoes, having tiny huddles to discuss whether his hair should be in a low bun, handing out iced coffees by the dozen. The tenor of the room is so gravely serious, so singularly focused on Roth, that it's hard to discern each person's role. Patti Wilson, who styles Cher, is here with an assistant who is taking notes; there is Roth's own personal assistant, whose last job was at Beyoncé's company, Parkwood; and there's Roth's social media manager, who has been filming the whole thing. The designer Robert Wun is not here in body, but his face is floating on a laptop via Zoom from Hong Kong, where it is about 3:30 in the morning.

"Right now [the weight] is entirely on the hip bone, which is not amazing," Roth says to Wun in the same tone you might use to convey displeasure at a paint color you knew wouldn't work but went ahead with anyway. They are discussing the gown Wun has created for the 2026 Costume Institute benefit at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. This will be Roth's eighth appearance at the Met Gala, and the dress code, Fashion Is Art, is particularly on-brand for someone who lives his life as a performance. Wun's creation is a sand-colored velvet dress, which he suggests and Roth agrees is not the right color and will eventually be swapped for a thundercloud gray version. It covers Roth's entire body—his neck, his arms, his fingers—with enough fabric that it puddles on the ground. It is so voluminous that on the first Monday in May, the Mark Hotel will have to remove the bed from Roth's room to accommodate the dress, the sculpture, and the team. Today the drape is not the problem. What Roth is troubleshooting is a 35-pound humanoid sculpture emerging out the back of the dress and wrapping its arms around Roth's upper body—a faceless specter looming over him that one armchair critic likens to something from Spirit Halloween. Roth's inspiration was the Jean-Léon Gérôme painting *Pygmalion and Galatea.*



At one point something about the way the sculpture is perched atop Roth's lanky frame is deemed extraterrestrial. "We are already veering towards *alien.* We need to stay away from *alien.* We are not in *Star Trek,*" says Roth, who then cradles some of the excess fabric of the gown and says "Here's my velvet baby" before the social media manager asks him to repeat it to the camera. "Here's my velvet baby," he trills again, eyes to the camera this time. The gown needs a name, Roth declares.

PHOTOGRAPHER **MARK SELIGER**

"Sisyphus," I call out. He likes it. The camera turns to me. "But are you Sisyphus or are you the rock?" I ask. Roth responds, "Well, that's the story of my life."

Sisyphus will eventually earn no fewer than 10 Instagram posts, ranging from red-carpet imagery to an earnestly composed studio session, to a collection of third-party meme reactions, to several docu-style videos, each with the camp production values of a Bravo reality series. ("Is there something on my back?" Roth asks in one, referencing the ghostly figure careening overhead. "God bless the person sitting next to me." "Are we the first three-way at The Met?" he asks his husband, Richie Jackson, in another.) Like all of Roth's content, there is a mix of dead seriousness, dry sarcasm, and wondrous joy in equal measure. He often laughs. He sometimes cries. And he always dresses and undresses like a 50-year-old Barbie in front of a rapt, bewildered audience of a million followers.

This past spring Roth celebrated hitting that 1 million Instagram followers with two meter-tall gold mylar balloons and a caption that read, "I'm wildly grateful that we've found each other, that we are walking this path of discovery together." Alongside is another video in which Roth, wearing a floor-length gold coat, pays tribute to himself, telling his audience that "your being here helps *me* express *me,*" followed by a slow-motion highlight reel of his appearances in a coterie of gowns.

Jackson likes to quote Warren Beatty in Madonna's documentary *Truth or Dare* when describing his husband: "She doesn't want to live off camera, much less talk. There's nothing to say off camera." "Richie calls it the Lucy and Richie show," Roth says. "He's not wrong."

The day after his Met Gala content wraps up, Roth will post a video welcoming his followers to Venice, where he will stage a one-man performance in a palazzo on the Grand Canal during the opening of the Biennale. (His debut as a performance artist last year took place at no less a venue than the Louvre.) The following month, the Broadway executive will attend the Tonys and the Tribeca Film Festival, post behind-the-scenes content from his *Purple* magazine cover photographed by Steven Klein, and announce the August 5 premiere of his acting debut in Ryan Murphy's adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis's *The Shards,* marking a new milestone in his multihyphenate odyssey. One could say that he is, finally, famous.

Characters like Roth have always invented themselves in New York. Standing six feet one in flats (not that he ever wears them), Roth, the son of a billionaire, went from bookish Princeton grad to Tony-winning theater producer but wanted more. The past decade has seen Roth leverage his audacity (and fortune) to develop an internet persona that can be described as the Marchesa Casati meets RuPaul. He has become so visible among Manhattanites that he has even become a target for homage, or perhaps lampooning: The creators of the *Gossip Girl* reboot wrote in a character named Gideon Wolfe with long hair and a penchant for outrageous designer clothing, men's and women's. (When I asked his representative what Roth thought of this depiction, she replied, "He is aware," and did not elaborate.) And now Roth is transforming once again, into a performance artist and an actor.

IS HE AN EMERGING ARTIST TAKING ON NEW MEDIUMS, OR IS HE A DECADENT INEVITABILITY OF OUR LATE-STAGE ATTENTION ECONOMY? IS HE BOTH?

Roth considers himself "pretty open" but in hours of interviews evaded many questions about his money, his family, even the neighborhood he lives in. Nonetheless, a portrait emerged of a peacock producer who has undergone a complete metamorphosis. And while plenty of colleagues and acquaintances were all too eager to speak about those topics anonymously, almost nobody wanted their names attached. Perhaps it's a reflection of the goodwill, or sheepishness, that Roth engenders. At least one person put it bluntly to me, saying, "It's crazy how in America, you can decide you're someone, and with enough money, you can make it true."

SEE THROUGH
Roth's retort to all the gossip is that "accusations of unseriousness are how girly boys have been put in their place since the beginning of time." Sweater by Dolce & Gabbana. Fashion Editor: Daniel Edley.

So is Roth a theater producer or a fashion influencer or a performance artist or a television actor? The answer is yes. And he is relentless. Is he an emerging artist taking on new mediums, or is he a decadent inevitability of our late-stage attention economy? Is he both? Whatever the case, he is a cultural conquistador who's only just begun.

Roth grew up in northern New Jersey and later Manhattan, the son of Steven and Daryl Roth and brother to Amanda. The family owned a private plane and employed a driver who chauffeured him to Horace Mann. At Princeton he studied philosophy—his thesis was on the subject of desire—and theater. He told a journalist that after graduating from college in 1997, he had what he called a "crisis of wealth" brought on by living in a West Village two-bedroom his mother chose and helped decorate. In the same interview, he recalled an elementary school classmate who told him they thought he would have given a bigger birthday present.

The primary source of this abundance was real estate. Steven Roth is among the largest landlords in the city through his company Vornado Realty Trust, which owns approximately 20 million square feet of New York City commercial space (for which the going rate is around $100 per square foot in Midtown). In May, Roth père said on an earnings call that the phrase "tax the rich" can be "just as hateful as some disgusting racial slurs," adding that his fellow billionaires should be "praised and thanked." He is, perhaps unsurprisingly, a longtime confidant and supporter of President Donald Trump. ("My dad's friends and politics are his and mine are mine," Roth tells me when pressed for comment.) Roth's maternal pedigree is a little more culturally ripe: Mother Daryl is a Pulitzer Prize–winning theater producer whose work includes both *August: Osage County* and *Proof.* (At the 2026 Tony awards, Jordan held Daryl's hand as she waited to learn whether she would secure her 14th win for *Liberation.* She did.) "Rumor is he is worth nine figures, which is life-changing money but not world-changing money," speculates one close New York City observer, though definitions of *world* may vary. (Roth, through his representative, would not confirm his net worth.)

Roth has always had real intelligence and, crucially, ambition. Shortly after college, he auditioned for an adaptation

of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that was later called *The Donkey Show.* The role required a costume of tiny shorts and a great deal of body glitter, which was, he says, "not a place in my journey with my body I wanted to be in." Instead, at 23, he helped them find a theater and put it on—in other words, he produced it. *The Donkey Show* played for six years Off Broadway. He had briefly considered becoming an academic but instead followed in his mother's footsteps and ensconced himself in the theater. As one Broadway person puts it, he was automatically an insider with his money and mother's connections but simultaneously an outsider for effectively buying his way in. However he got there, he was talented and immediately successful. His first Broadway production was the 2000 revival of *The Rocky Horror Show* that made him the youngest lead producer ever nominated for a Tony at just 25.









CHILDHOOD AND VENICE: COURTESY OF JORDAN ROTH. WITH PARENTS: WALTER MCBRIDE/*NEW YORK TIMES*. WHITE WINGS: LANDON NORDEMAN/*NEW YORK TIMES*. WEDDING: TINA FINEBERG/*NEW YORK TIMES*. SHARDS: FX.

MADAME BUTTERFLY
Roth's metamorphosis from buzz cut and neutral suits to fantastical couture has been a decade in the making. Now "I am allowing myself to paint with all the brushes," he says.

In 2005, Roth joined Jujamcyn, a company that owns five Broadway theaters, as a resident producer. The next year he became vice president, and in 2009, a year before he earned an MBA from Columbia, Roth became president and co-owner of the company, taking a 50 percent stake for an undisclosed amount. When he upped his stake in 2013, *Variety* estimated the transaction to be in the tens of millions of dollars.

"Broadway has never understood what to make of him," says one longtime observer. The Shuberts and Nederlanders, the two other dynasties who own the majority of Broadway theaters, did not have similar offspring trying to merge hands-on creativity with management. But Roth had a vision for how his unique combination of attributes could not just benefit his own productions but the theater world at large.

"As an artistic producer, Jordan Roth brings a most unique combination of taste, brilliance, ambition, and genuine love," says Lear deBessonet, artistic director of Lincoln Center Theater. "He knows how to care for artists and to see a path for the grandest realization of their dreams."

"When Jordan was running Jujamcyn, he always brought his trademark creativity and appetite for visionary work to bear on the shows he presented," says theater director and longtime friend Michael Mayer. "While it always seemed to me that he was more personally invested artistically than the prototypical theater owner, who is primarily focused on the real estate and financial perspective of the productions, he really could handle both aspects with astonishing skill. He learned at the knees









MET GALA: NINA WESTERVELT/NEW YORK TIMES. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

of his parents, who were standard-bearers of each discipline."

Under Roth's leadership, Jujamcyn amassed hits like *Hadestown, Kinky Boots, Moulin Rouge! The Musical,* and an overwhelmingly acclaimed revival of *Angels in America,* cementing his place in the firmament of contemporary theater. He has won seven Tonys and four Drama Desk awards. *The New York Times* has written at least four glowing profiles of Roth, calling him variously "a New Force on Broadway," "a Broadway Big Shot," "a Broadway Bigwig," and a "Broadway Mogul," and declared that he "redefines clout" in yet another. *New York* magazine called him "an Industry Evangelist," and the *South China Morning Post* even called him "edgy."

As a producer, Roth wasn't solely focused on the bottom line; he organized a Broadway fundraiser for Hillary Clinton and another for President Biden, and is quietly generous across a number of causes. He had a reputation for being both artist-friendly and aggressively advocating for shows he wanted. Roth was unusually dedicated to the tiny details too. At Jujamcyn he introduced smaller ice cubes that would melt faster to reduce clinking noises in the audience. For *Mean Girls,* he troubleshot long lines for women's restrooms with ushers carrying signs that read "#FollowMe (I'm the line for the ladies' room)." The work of a producer can be tedious; collaborators note that Roth's approach has always been long on passion and short on complaining.

In 2023, Jujamcyn merged operations with Britain's Ambassador Theater Group (now ATG Entertainment), where Roth remains a board member and creative director, presumably creating a windfall for him. Two years later he sold his former apartment in the West Village for a reported $20 million and acquired a town house that is decorated liberally with Braquenié's Coromandel silk, which sells for around $600 per yard. He lives among paintings from Elizabeth Peyton, Francis Bacon, and John Singer Sargent; a Lalanne sculpture is currently on loan to The Met. He rechristened his 1899 home in the Hamptons, which was designed by the same architect who did nearby Grey Gardens, LoveLee, and has welcomed both Oprah Winfrey and Pete Buttigieg as guests.

It was also around this time when he started applying the same combination of money, vision, and passion that he brought to the theater to his fashion.

Until a decade ago, Roth sported a military-style buzz cut and usually wore a Prada suit in either gray, navy blue, or black with an untucked shirt, no tie, top button unbuttoned, and sneakers. In 2017, while working on upgrading the Tonys red carpet, Anna Wintour simply asked *Vogue*'s menswear



editor, Michael Philouze, "Don't you think Jordan should wear Gucci?" So off to Gucci the two men went. There, Roth was presented with two options: a maroon tuxedo and a cherry red silk suit with a tiger embroidered on the back. He put on the latter and it unlocked something in him, an almost macho approach to dressing, of winning at all costs. And he was willing to pay.

Designers quickly embraced him. "He understands that at the end of the day, you have to enjoy what you put on your body, and it has to have a sense of humor—he's incredibly sarcastic," says Fernando Garcia, the co–creative director at Monse. "There is never a heavy moment with Jordan. He can talk about politics to *Love Island* in one sentence."

For Roth, it also opened up something else. "I was very aware in my early days of dressing when there was a skirt on that rack. That's women's clothes...I was also aware when that started to drop away. It wasn't women's clothes or men's clothes. It was just, those are my clothes." Designer Iris van Herpen says he's one of the most pleasant clients to work with. "I don't know anyone who does it like he does—he's so free in his approach to masculinity and femininity.... The universe is just open with Jordan."

"I am allowing myself to paint with all the brushes" is how Roth puts it.

Eventually, Roth's appearance started to change. His body got lankier and his cheeks sharper, aided by a gluten-free, dairy-free regimen wherein, for example, he orders Goop Kitchen almond-flour pizza but picks off the cheese. His overall effect became more androgynous, whether in or out of women's clothing.

He grew his hair long past his shoulders, bleached his eyebrows, and started buying and wearing couture. Whether by his choice or their design, he is rarely seen in the front row of the grand maisons—Chanel, Dior—but instead champions another tier of the couture landscape: smaller designers such as Wun and van Herpen. Nor does he order the kind of custom-fitted little skirt suits that some VICs—Very Important Clients—flock to, but the most outrageous gowns. Take, for instance, the feather-print Glenn Martens for Maison Margiela with the matching mask and black Tabi boots that Roth wore to the 2026 Tony Awards. He towered in his seat to the point that I felt sympathy for nominated actor Nicholas Christopher, who was seated behind him. When asked what he'd like to see Roth wear, his friend the designer Thom Browne quipped, "A gray suit," and laughed before adding, "I love how he's having fun with it and how serious he is about it all."

Even fashion kids have taken notice. Reid McVey, a college student studying fashion design who works at the archival designer emporium Desert Vintage, started following Roth for his Met Gala looks but stayed for his everyday maximalism. "What keeps me hooked is how he genuinely enjoys fashion, and he's unapologetic about it," McVey says, noting that his style is the antithesis of the quiet luxury that defines our contemporary idea of good taste. At a brunch in the Hamptons attended by a mix of writers and Broadway people, the conversation came around to Roth and the millions of dollars he had likely spent on fashion. One acquaintance piped up to defend him, saying, "Listen, someone's got to buy the couture."

THERE IS A MIX OF DEAD SERIOUSNESS, DRY SARCASM, AND WONDROUS JOY IN EQUAL MEASURE. HE OFTEN LAUGHS. HE SOMETIMES CRIES. AND HE ALWAYS DRESSES AND UNDRESSES LIKE A 50-YEAR-OLD BARBIE.

Many VICs enjoy posting about their fashion excursions—shopping for custom looks in Paris, wearing them everywhere else—but Roth has operationalized his content creation. On Instagram, he seems to have discovered that maybe his most significant talent is fanning attention in his own direction.

Jackson, his husband, a *Nurse Jackie* executive producer who wrote a 2020 parenting guide titled *Gay Like Me,* with whom he has a son and stepson, is often the sole person helping him out of elaborate looks at the end of the night. "It's so intimate," Roth says. And still he puts his camera on the mirror and films it.

The couple met in 2003 and married in 2012 at Jujamcyn's Al Hirschfeld Theatre in front of about 600 guests, including Donald and Melania Trump. (Roth has spoken out against Trump.) Jackson has been by his side—literally on nearly every red-carpet photo and every charity dinner—for the whole transformative ride.

When it comes to Instagram, Roth understands that the extravagance and gesticulating animation juxtaposed with nearly naked moments makes for a bizarre spectacle from which it is hard to look away. Standing in his boudoir the size of a one-bedroom apartment, Roth often looks half like Effie Trinket from *The Hunger Games* and half like a housewife in a Douglas Sirk film. In one video he gives a tutorial on mixing prints. "I think everything can go with everything," he says as he pairs a black-and-white polka-dot pussy-bow blouse with black-and-white plaid pants, a black-and-white tweed jacket, and a zebra-print clutch. In another video he shows off a flesh wound on the back of his neck from a zipper pressing against it all night. He almost always seems to be having fun at his own expense.

Not everyone is charmed. "He's so profoundly unserious right now," says someone who's known Roth for years, not hesitating to gossip about their charismatic friend anonymously. They say this with love, they hasten to add—they feel Roth is too smart for this, that he's laying out a lot of money and effort into something that doesn't require his intelligence and won't earn him more Tonys. The implication is that pursuing social media fame is fine for an influencer, but why is *he* doing it, to what end? There is no obvious monetization—or any need for it. His peers find it all a bit baffling. "Jordan wasn't happy just being rich and having a great life," one New Yorker snipes. Perhaps instead of naming his Met dress Sisyphus, they would have called it Narcissus. Roth's retort to all that is that "accusations of unseriousness are how girly boys have been put in their place since the beginning of time."

To Roth, his entire life is performance and it is his art. "We are all in daily acts of performance, but I don't take the word 'performance' to imply artifice," he says.

He means the art part literally. The next time I visit Roth's studio, in late April, he is rehearsing a solo show that will coincide with the opening of the 2026 Venice Biennale, considered the art world's holiest of holies, a goal to which most artists spend their whole

HAIR PRODUCTS BY ACT+ACRE; HAIR, BRENT LAWLER; MAKEUP, SIL BRUINSMA; MANICURE, ELLE GERSTEIN; TAILOR, SUSAN BALCUNAS. PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY MADI OVERSTREET. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

careers aspiring. Roth has spent months planning a performance artwork inspired by Irene di Spilimbergo, a 16th-century painter, student, and muse of Titian who at one point lived in the Palazzo dei Fiori. A collaboration with Performance Space New York, Roth's artwork saw him cut collages out of life-size vinyl prints of di Spilimbergo's paintings, revealing himself behind them. A digital camera captured images every six seconds.

Like the Met fitting, there are once again about 15 people in his studio, including Julia Crockett, a movement coach who is helping guide Roth to remember the choreographed cutting and poses they had worked out. She watches intently and calls out shorthand between them. "Yes...yes.... Do your thing.... Nice, nice, love it.... This is great to linger on, it's very strange."

The piece played twice in Venice to an audience from a mix of backgrounds: Michèle Lamy, the wife and muse to Rick Owens, was there; the gallerists Glenn Scott Wright and Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn;Scott Rothkopf, the director of the Whitney Museum, where Steven Roth was a trustee. If he was viewed as an art-world interloper, Roth has enough influence and goodwill that no one was really going to say that out loud. One Biennale attendee, impressed by Roth's commitment, tells me, "He definitely gave his all. But this woman next to me was straight-up scrolling his Instagram feed and looking at his Met Gala look."

Roth says the purpose of the piece was to meld with the paintings. "What keeps coming up for me is this object-subject. So I'm looking at the painting, then I am changing the painting. I am being viewed while I have the ability to see while I am being seen," he says. Narcissus, again.

KINKY BOOTS
"I would love to see him do *Steel Magnolias*," says *The Shards* costar Kaia Gerber. Clothing by Ferragamo; shoes by Thom Browne.

The performance garnered some coverage in elite arts publications. There were photos in a *New York Times* recap of the Biennale. *Art Forum* called Roth "the soaring, fashion-forward image-generator who is not only the GOAT of Broadway producers but also a red-carpet mainstay of the Met Gala."

It wasn't Roth's first foray into the art world, a realm so snobbish that it makes fashion look downright homey. Roth added performance artist to his résumé in 2025 with "Radical Acts of Unrelenting Beauty," where he soared above cloth re-creations of the I.M. Pei pyramid outside the Louvre, the venue that also inspired mementos given to special guests. *The New York Times* ran a rosy story in advance of his debut with accompanying videos of Roth in a white gown. Many critics remain skeptical that this artist's debut, or any artist's debut, deserved to be in the Louvre. Someone who attended a dinner in Manhattan for a cause Roth chaired recounts how CONTINUED ON PAGE 122






VANITY FAIR'S
2026
Best Dressed List
Miss MICHAELA COEL
Mr. COLMAN DOMINGO
Mr. JACOB ELORDI
Miss PALOMA ELSESSER
Ms. FRIDA ESCOBEDO
Miss LOUISA JACOBSON
Miss HUNTER SCHAFER
Mr. HARRY STYLES
Miss TEYANA TAYLOR
Miss ANNA WEYANT
MADE IN NEW YORK



For the first time this decade, *Vanity Fair* presents a Best Dressed List. Much has changed in this millennium's Roaring Twenties:

The pandemic elevated athleisure to unlikely, undeserving places, including the office and the cocktail bar; the return of Donald Trump to the presidency has exalted bad taste—just take a look at the Oval Office; and the fashion industry is on the other side of a two-year overhaul, with designers moving from house to house to varied degrees of success. Fashion is moving at breakneck speed, and not all of it, dare we say, is very good. The rise of quiet luxury has made many of the clothes on the runways and online look the same. Conservatism disguised as internet buzzwords (by which we mean the tradwife, for one) has walked fashion back a few years, or decades.

As the eminently quotable Yves Saint Laurent once said, "Fashion fades, style is eternal." Or perhaps we look to Truman Capote, who wrote that good style is a "matter of underdressing"—even if some of our maximalists would cause him alarm. Thus this year's list honors those who do more than wear clothes well or live their lives in head-to-toe ensembles handed to them by eager PR apparatchiks. Our honorees embody an idea: They are devout dressers whose appetite for beauty and self-invention is as voracious as their idiosyncratic taste. The inductees transcend generations, occupations, and sensibilities. They are as passionate about a vintage French chore jacket or a thrifted pair of earrings as they are beguiled by the charms of haute couture. They are originators and inspirations—they are, we could say, always on the mood board.

These 10 honorees and those in the categories that accompany them were selected by the staff of *Vanity Fair* from hundreds of suggestions, following weeks of deliberation. VF

2026
Best Dressed List



TEYANA TAYLOR

Because she's brought pizzazz to haute couture and mostly styles herself

OCCUPATION
Actor, singer

RESIDENCE
Atlanta, New York City, and Los Angeles

NOTABLE LABELS
Chanel, Tom Ford, Thom Browne, Schiaparelli, Ashi Studio

FASHION PASSION
Bijoux, couture, and a snatched waist

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
An ankle-length curled organza coat by Veronica Leoni for Calvin Klein Collection paired with Tiffany & Co. diamonds

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Indomitable

STYLIST
Self

PREVIOUS PAGE: JOSEPHINE SCHIELE. ALL PAGES: CUSTOM LABELS MANUFACTURED BY LABELTEX. LABEL DESIGN BY DAVID HEASTY. TAYLOR: AEON/GC IMAGES.





JACOB ELORDI

Because of his ability to make a shopping bag look like an It bag

OCCUPATION
Actor

RESIDENCE
Los Angeles and Byron Bay, Australia

NOTABLE LABELS
Bottega Veneta, Cartier

FASHION PASSION
Vintage workwear, luxury handbags, and squeezing a book into the back pocket of a pair of jeans

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A Chanel women's blazer paired with white trousers and black leather lace-up derby shoes

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Boyfriend

STYLIST
Wendi Ferreira and Nicole DeJulio





WHITE PANT: DAVID JON/GETTY IMAGES; TO WARNER BROS. PICTURES. TRENCH: GILES ANDERSON/CAMERA PRESS/REDUX. ALL OTHERS: FAKEGRID.





LOUISA JACOBSON

Because she makes both a leather suit and Joan of Arc–esque armor exude gender-agnostic sex appeal

OCCUPATION
Actor

RESIDENCE
New York City

NOTABLE LABELS
Tom Ford, Kallmeyer, Khaite, Eckhaus Latta

FASHION PASSION
A very good suit or an equally sharp shoulder, plus some elongated sunglasses

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A Dilara Findikoglu armor-cum-dress embellished with coins, safety pins, and other knickknacks

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Audacious

STYLIST
Edward Bowleg III





BLACK SUIT: TYLER MATTHEW OYER. MINIDRESS: SHOSHANNA.COM. MET GALA LOOKS: BEN TAYLOR. JACKET: TIZIANO RAW.



MICHAELA COEL

Because such proficient use of color and volume requires a sense of adventure

OCCUPATION
Actor

RESIDENCE
London

NOTABLE LABELS
Givenchy, Schiaparelli, Loewe

FASHION PASSION
Colorblocking and some extra fabric here and there

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A vermilion draped top and violet pants, both cut in velvet by budding New York–based designer Colleen Allen

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Undaunted

STYLIST
Nell Kalonji

COEL: THE HAPA BLONDE/GC IMAGES.

2024
Best Dressed List



FRIDA ESCOBEDO

Because she understands that getting dressed, not unlike designing a building, is a matter of proportion and mathematics

OCCUPATION
Architect

RESIDENCE
Mexico City and New York City

NOTABLE LABELS
Gabriela Hearst, Bottega Veneta

FASHION PASSION
Minimalism, clean lines

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A single-dress mash-up consisting of a white T-shirt and orange fringed skirt by Alaïa

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Balanced

STYLIST
Self

ESCOBEDO: CLÉMENT PASCAL.





HARRY STYLES

Because he understands the power of short shorts and knows how to wear a tie, sometimes at the same time

OCCUPATION
Actor, musician

RESIDENCE
London

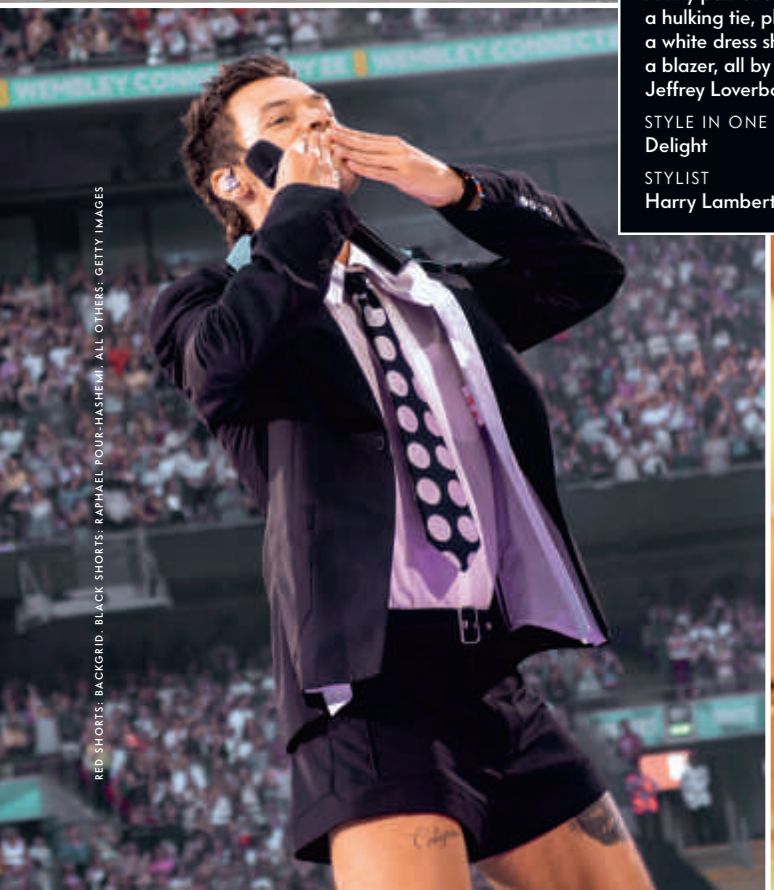
NOTABLE LABELS
Valentino, Dior, Celine, Prada, Adidas

FASHION PASSION
Running shorts in every context

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A tiny pair of shorts and a hulking tie, plus a white dress shirt and a blazer, all by Charles Jeffrey Loverboy

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Delight

STYLIST
Harry Lambert





RED SHORTS: BACKGRID. BLACK SHORTS: RAPHAEL POUR-HASHEMI. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES





PALOMA ELSESSER

Because she treats an evening gown, an archival find, or a pair of jeans with an equal dose of panache

OCCUPATION
Supermodel

RESIDENCE
New York City

NOTABLE LABELS
Diotima, Marni, Alaïa

FASHION PASSION
Sourcing and wearing the deepest of archival runway deep cuts

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A dress composed with multiple repurposed garments from the 1920s through the 1940s by designer Francesco Risso for the 2026 Met Gala

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Potpourri

STYLIST
Aly Cooper





ALL: GETTY IMAGES.



HUNTER SCHAFER

Because there is not a pretty dress she can't make cool, nor a funky look she can't make beautiful

OCCUPATION
Actor

RESIDENCE
Los Angeles

NOTABLE LABELS
Prada, Schiaparelli

FASHION PASSION
Looking like a painting or referencing one

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A gold semi-sheer Roberto Cavalli dress covered in sequins and embellishments, plus soft waves on her hair

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Glamazon

STYLIST
Dara

SCHAEFER: STEVE GRANITZ/FILMMAGIC.



ANNA WEYANT

Because no one else wears runway Marc Jacobs with such insouciance

OCCUPATION
Artist

RESIDENCE
New York City and Nashville

NOTABLE LABEL
Marc Jacobs

FASHION PASSION
A sense of play

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A head-to-toe Marc Jacobs doll-like outfit worn at the 2026 Met Gala

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Whimsy

STYLIST
Self

WEYANT: MATT CROSSICK/PA IMAGES VIA GETTY IMAGES.





COLMAN DOMINGO

Because he wears everything, be that a sequined blouse or a pinstripe suit, with ease and conviction

OCCUPATION
Actor, director

RESIDENCE
Los Angeles

NOTABLE LABELS
Valentino, Boucheron, Ralph Lauren

FASHION PASSION
Extravagance and some sparkle

MOST MEMORABLE LOOK OF THE YEAR
A charcoal-gray pinstripe suit custom-made by Jacquemus finished with an oversize pocket square and a floral brooch

STYLE IN ONE WORD
Vigorous

STYLIST
Wayman + Micah





BALCONY: VICTORIA STEVENS/AUGUST. JEANS: LUCA GROTTOLI. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

2026 Best Dressed List

PERENNIALS

Those whose style is enduring



TOM FORD

OCCUPATION **Fashion designer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A Ford classic: a perfectly tailored black velvet jacket and tuxedo pants accessorized with a bow tie and his signature sunglasses**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Reinventing Gucci, his black suits**



DAPPER DAN

OCCUPATION **Fashion designer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A white three-piece suit with a zebra-print blouse and white hat**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **His irreverent, pioneering fashion remixes and collages of various luxury brand logos**



NICOLE KIDMAN

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A custom blood-red sequined gown by Matthieu Blazy for Chanel. "Red is vitality," she said on the carpet at the 2026 Met Gala when asked about the story behind her gown.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Onscreen, a variety of wigs. Off-screen, a movie star gown**



TRACEE ELLIS ROSS

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **An Alaïa by Pieter Mulier dress consisting of a white oversize T-shirt and fringed skirt plus a leather jacket and burgundy tights**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Always being one of the first to wear a look off the runway**



CHLOË SEVIGNY

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **An off-the-shoulder butter yellow dress with a high slit and dramatic train, here held by her son Vanja, by Chinese designer Samuel Guì Yang**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being one of New York City's proto It girls**

ROSS: COURTESY OF TRACEE ELLIS ROSS. KIDMAN: CARL TIMPONE/BFA.COM. SEVIGNY: D.V. DEVINCENTIS. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



LAUREN SANTO DOMINGO

OCCUPATION **Cofounder of Moda Operandi**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A vintage Rochas dress and jacket by Olivier Theyskens from his fall-winter 2003 collection for the house**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being the ultimate contemporary socialite and the last swan standing, plus her much-mythologized good taste**



LENNY KRAVITZ

OCCUPATION **Musician**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A denim-on-denim pair of übertight jeans and matching vest with a colorful chain mail blouse underneath, some bug-eyed sunglasses, and the rock star studded belt de rigueur**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **So committed Kravitz is to his look that he works out in leather pants.**



GRACE JONES

OCCUPATION **Singer, model**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A charcoal double-breasted suit by Michael Rider, the American designer of Parisian It brand Celine**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Having been a muse to designer Azzedine Alaïa and a generational model**



AMY FINE COLLINS

OCCUPATION **Journalist**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A tweed skirt suit by Thom Browne paired with a shaggy cropped jacket, all in gray**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her devotion to Thom Browne's designs and authoring *The International Best-Dressed List: The Official Story***



LISA EISNER

OCCUPATION **Artist, jewelry designer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A bright turquoise cheongsam-cut dress with silver metallic jacquard motifs plus a pink feather jacket made from a Bob Mackie boa and white cat-eye sunglasses**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her own line of bold artisanal jewelry**

JONES: COURTESY OF CELINE. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



ALESSANDRO MICHELE

OCCUPATION **Creative director of Valentino**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **The bucolic straw hat and deep red velvet pants he wore while walking the cobblestoned streets of Rome**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Reigniting Gucci in the late 2010s and helping define Harry Styles's personal style**



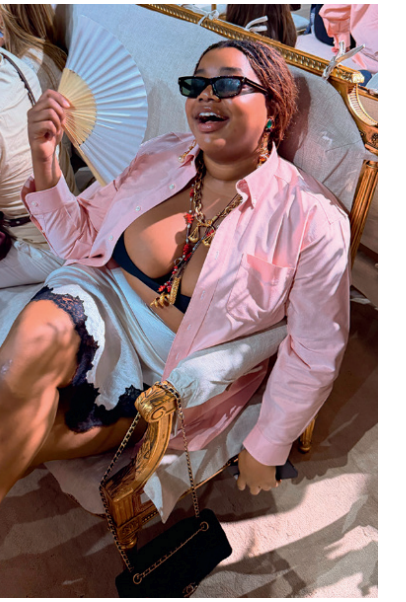
MARC JACOBS

OCCUPATION **Designer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A golden tweed Chanel blazer by Matthieu Blazy paired with wide-leg jeans and mesh flats**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **He's Marc Jacobs, and he's also on the cover of the 2026 Style Issue of *VF***



MIUCCIA PRADA

OCCUPATION **Codesigner of Prada and creative director of Miu Miu**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **The tan coat she wore at the Prada spring-summer 2027 menswear runway show in Milan**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Transforming her Prada into a leading global brand—plus founding Miu Miu, an It-girl-favorite label; her incomparable jewelry collection**



GABRIELLA KAREFA-JOHNSON

OCCUPATION **Stylist**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A black Chanel handbag, pumps, and bra paired with a white slip skirt and a pink button-down worn open to reveal a hefty necklace stack**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **A fashion multihyphenate: writer-stylist-influencer**



ANOK YAI

OCCUPATION **Supermodel**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A gray canvas tailored dress by Schiaparelli, which she wore immediately after walking Daniel Roseberry's fall 2026 haute couture show for the label in July**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being one of her generation's breakout models**

MICHELE: IPA/ALAMY; KAREFA-JOHNSON: JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

2026 Best Dressed List

PROFESSIONALS

The industry's alpha dressers



RACHEL TASHJIAN

OCCUPATION **CNN senior style reporter**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A Prada sweater and Miu Miu slip skirt worn with a vintage pink ostrich-feather collar, a faux-mink stole, and a vintage beaded bag**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **The author of the insider favorite newsletter *Opulent Tips***



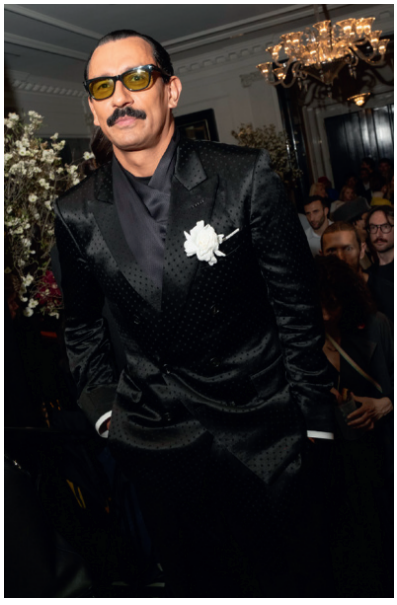
KENDALL JENNER

OCCUPATION **Supermodel**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **The custom baby blue Chanel dress by Matthieu Blazy she wore to the 2026 *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her status as one of the highest-paid models working today and her penchant for good vintage**



JULIA SARR-JAMOIS

OCCUPATION **Contributing fashion director of British *Vogue***
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **Red sequined jeans and a simple white tank top with green binding to match her green satin strappy sandals**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being one of the most compelling dressers among the fashion editors working today**



HAIDER ACKERMANN

OCCUPATION **Creative director of Tom Ford**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A black suit in polka-dot jacquard worn with a silk scarf and a floral brooch**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Having masterminded some of Timothée Chalamet's best outfits, including the red backless top he wore at the Venice Film Festival in 2022**



RAUL LOPEZ

OCCUPATION **Designer of Luar**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A laser-cut black and yellow suit of his own design that closed his spring 2026 Luar show**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **A well-regarded fashion designer who cofounded the pioneering label Hood by Air**

JAMOIS: ANGELO PENNETTA-ART PARTNER/TRUNK ARCHIVE. JENNER: GERMAN LARKIN. TAHJIAN: MATTEO PRANDONI/BFA.COM. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

2026 Best Dressed List

Originals

Our most outlandish, innovative dressers



SPIKE LEE

OCCUPATION **Filmmaker**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A Louis Vuitton basketball-net purse—ball included—with a warm-up shirt**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being the Knicks' most committed celebrity fan**



ALYSA LIU

OCCUPATION **Olympic figure skater**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A Louis Vuitton–created strapless gown with a voluminous mille-feuille skirt designed to resemble human muscle and tissue as well as the waves her skates carve into the ice**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her signature hair with its stripes of bleach**



COLBY MUGRABI

OCCUPATION **Founder**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A paper doll–like Marc Jacobs gown with a Disney-princess quality and trompe l'oeil drawn-on details**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **An encyclopedic knowledge of couture**



THELMA GOLDEN

OCCUPATION **Director of the Studio Museum in Harlem**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A gown with a draped detail at the midriff**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Wearing the brightest outfit at an art function**



HILTON ALS

OCCUPATION **Writer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A blue-and-white-striped oxford shirt, a gray sweater, and a stately, almost royal—though unexpected—black jacket with fur accents**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **His very nice cardigans**

MUGRABI: PHOTOGRAPH OF COLBY BY ROSIBEL DEL JESUS/© (1964-1965) THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS/LICENSED BY ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK. ALS: ALI SMITH. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



POPE LEO XIV

OCCUPATION **Head of the Catholic Church**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **Even prior to the papacy, Leo, FKA Father Bob, took his modest cream cassock to heavenly heights by pairing them with Nikes**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Leo has kept his sense of wry casualness, sometimes sporting baseball caps**



SANDY POWELL

OCCUPATION **Costume designer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **Some classic boots with slim black trousers and a three-dimensional structural houndstooth blazer**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Wearing some very cool, very graphic suits**



ROSALÍA

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A slashed McQueen dress in a floral jacquard designed by Seán McGirr**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Making otherwise peculiar-looking fashion seem easy and sexy**



YSEULT

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A custom ensemble by Harris Reed featuring a shimmering golden bodice and a draped collar**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **She'll always surprise you.**



BJÖRK

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A coat made of crocheted fringe by Louise Trotter for Bottega Veneta with a Shinji Konishi fox headpiece**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being one of music's most original dressers**

POPE LEO: VATICAN NEWS. BJORK: COURTESY OF BOTTEGA VENETA. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



RIHANNA & A$AP ROCKY

OCCUPATIONS **Singer and Fenty founder; rapper**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **At the 2026 Met Gala, she wore a Maison Margiela gown made with 115,000 crystal beads; he donned a Chanel smoking robe with black satin lapels.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being two of the best dressed musicians today**



KIM KARDASHIAN & NORTH WEST

OCCUPATIONS **Reality TV star and Skims cofounder; daughter of Kardashian and Ye**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **The hooded dress and safety pin dress (accessorized punkily with a Balenciaga bag, and studded boots) that the pair respectively wore at the Venice Film Festival**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Individualism—like mother, like daughter**



EMMANUEL & BRIGITTE MACRON

OCCUPATIONS **President and first lady of France**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **For the US-France state dinner, he wore a black suit while she wore a gown by Louis Vuitton.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Arguably the most polished first couple today**



STAVROS NIARCHOS & DASHA ZHUKOVA NIARCHOS

OCCUPATIONS **Businessman; entrepreneur**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **His, a simple slim-cut black suit; hers, a burgundy Prada dress with a matching embroidered jacket**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her penchant for Prada and understated good taste.**



LAW ROACH & ZENDAYA

OCCUPATIONS **Stylist; actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **The outfits they wore to the Louis Vuitton 2027 cruise runway show at The Frick Collection in New York City—he, a leather jacket; she, a minidress, both by the French house**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Their prolific agenda-setting stylist-actor partnership**

KARDASHIAN AND WEST: BACKGRID. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

2026 Best Dressed List

DUOS

Romantically, platonically, familially, or otherwise linked ensembles



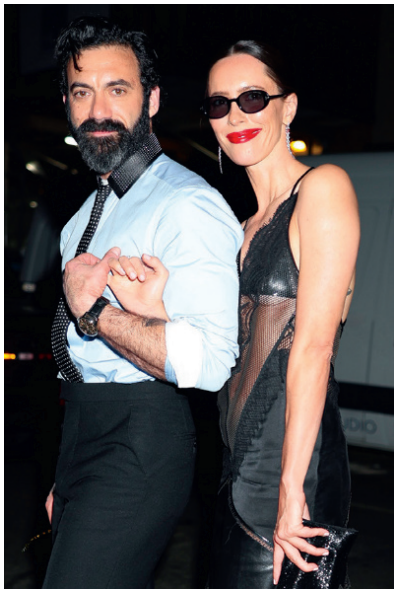
MARY-KATE & ASHLEY OLSEN

OCCUPATIONS **Designers of The Row**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **Their matching black coats—and lived-in handbags—worn while out in New York City**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Their much-photographed outfits and their influential designs**



TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET & KYLIE JENNER

OCCUPATIONS **Actor; reality TV star and makeup maven**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **At the Oscars, he wore a white Givenchy by Sarah Burton suit, and she donned a red dress by Schiaparelli.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Their viral matching Chrome Hearts orange looks**



MORGAN SPECTOR & REBECCA HALL

OCCUPATIONS **Actors**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **The blue shirt and tucked-in-tie look he wore and the barely there dress she wore to a Met Gala after-party, both Tom Ford by Haider Ackermann**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Coordinating with each other without being matchy-matchy**



RICK OWENS & MICHÈLE LAMY

OCCUPATIONS **Founders of Rick Owens and its parent company, Owenscorp**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **His, a tailored coat of his own design; hers, a top made of ropelike material and leather boots, also by Rick Owens**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **The singular universe they've built with Owenscorp and their many friends and acolytes**



SARAH PAULSON & HOLLAND TAYLOR

OCCUPATIONS **Actors**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOKS **At the 2026 *Vanity Fair* Oscar Party, Paulson wore a look by Matières Fécales and Taylor was dressed in a brocade black jacket by Christian Cowan.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Neither seems to dress to complement each other, yet somehow they always do.**

OLSEN TWINS: BACKGRID. PAULSON AND TAYLOR: HUNTER ABRAMS. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.

2026

Best Dressed List

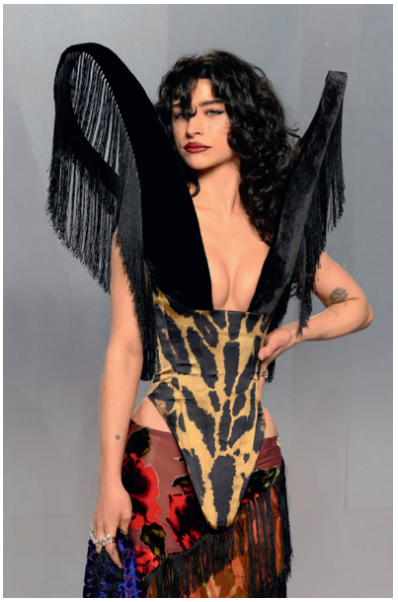
the future

The rising generations



GUITARRICADELAFUENTE

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
A custom Jonathan Anderson for Dior forest green Edwardian-style jacket with floral embroidery paired with relaxed light-wash jeans and worn shirtless
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
Wearing Anderson's Dior, very, very well



ODESSA A'ZION

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A dramatic Harris Reed fall-winter 2026 corset and skirt gown. The actor and the designer are family friends, as Reed went to school with A'zion's sister.**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **She styles herself for the red carpet.**



OLYMPIA OF GREECE

OCCUPATION **Socialite, model, girl-about-town**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
All Demna's Gucci from head to toe
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
An aura like she's never seen a cloudy day



BLUE IVY CARTER

OCCUPATION **Beyoncé's summer intern**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
The Met Gala amended its own age policy (and Beyoncé amended her daughter's curfew) to allow for this custom cream Balenciaga strapless tea-length dress by Pierpaolo Piccioli.
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
Being her parents' daughter



OLIVIA DEAN

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
A custom strapless column gown by Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez for Loewe featuring a delicate floral caviar beadwork all over
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
How fashion houses including Chanel, Alaïa, and McQueen all outfitted her in custom dresses during her breakout year

GUITARRICADELAFUENTE: ADRIÀ CAÑAMERAS/DIOR. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



CHASE INFINITI

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
A custom Thom Browne trompe l'oeil dress embellished with sequins in primary-colored brushstroke shapes inspired by the Venus de Milo
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
Coming out of the gate as one of the best-dressed actors of the 2025–2026 awards season



LUX PASCAL

OCCUPATION **Actor**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A Chanel by Matthieu Blazy drop-waist dress with gray and white floral embellishments and a flowy skirt**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Being as stylish as her brother Pedro and walking Blazy's first runway show for Chanel in October 2025**



ISHA AMBANI

OCCUPATION **Retail executive**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK **A custom Gaurav Gupta sari woven with pure gold threads by master artisans plus a bustier embellished with more than 200 old-mine-cut diamonds and stones from her mother's private collection**
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME **Her patronage of Indian couturiers**



TYLA

OCCUPATION **Singer**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
She brought the words of her hit song "Chanel" ("Put her in Chanel") to life by performing the single in a Matthieu Blazy for Chanel set
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
Showing as much skin as possible in the most glamorous way



ERLING HAALAND

OCCUPATION **Soccer player**
MOST MEMORABLE LOOK
The white silky suit and draped scarf he wore to the Dolce & Gabbana Alta Sartoria event in Sicily fresh off the World Cup
FASHION CLAIM TO FAME
Being an athlete with a Birkin bag obsession and his blond man bun

HAALAND: VANESSA TRYDE. ALL OTHERS: GETTY IMAGES.



THE COWBOY

James Simmons, based in Yonkers, New York, astride Falcon. His ilk are the embodiment of hard-won American elegance, made and beautifully worn. Clothing by Louis Vuitton Men's.

THE UNITED STATES OF STYLE

What does the US look like today, at one of its most culturally fragmented moments? That's a mirror not everyone wants to hold up. As the nation enters its 251st year, *Vanity Fair* documents an array of contemporary characters who embody American style archetypes

FASHION EDITOR **TONNE GOODMAN**
PHOTOGRAPHER **LUIS ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ**





THE SCENE

Today's cool kids, whether internet-famous TikTokers or jack-of-all-trades creative Zoomers, are a call back to the original '60s youthquake, which gave us both sexual freedom and the miniskirt. "Everyone here looks like someone I know, or love, or hate," says a photo assistant on set. It's true: They live rowdy lives and wear unruly clothes: You will never know what—or who!—they do based on their clothing. But they're up to everything. This raucous crew includes a DJ, an influencer, several stylists, a painter, and some whose careers are undefined, but whose style is sharp.
First from the left: skirt by Prada; shoes by Chanel. Second from the left: jacket and jeans by Tom Ford; sweater by Celine; boots by Fendi Men's. Third from the left: slip by Miu Miu. Fourth from the left: dress and shoes by Prada. Second from the right: top and skirt by Schiaparelli.

THE SUITS

Mary H.K. Choi, author of *Pool House*, says she feels invincible in her Saint Laurent two-piece. Journalist Jacob Soboroff typically does not wear a suit when he's anchoring his MS NOW show, but he sets the drift here. These two, along with, say, New York City mayor Zohran Mamdani, represent a new kind of power dresser. Suit by Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello; shirt by Tom Ford. Opposite: trench coat by Celine; suit and shirt by Loro Piana; shoes by Brunello Cucinelli.







THE CLEAN GIRLS

Actors Anna Van Patten and Phoebe Tonkin are the internet era's definition of girls next door. By way of Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy and in the great tradition of 1990s minimalism, the clean girl is the new archetype of a certain sort of beauty. On Van Patten, dress by Alaïa; on Tonkin, dress by Courrèges.





THE FACE

In the age of protein, peptides, and looksmaxxing, everybody wants to look new. Marlon Lundgren Garcia, a Swedish-born model and internet streamer, is the kind of face (and six-foot-five physique) of perfection a generation of men pursue for themselves. Tank top by Gucci.

THE BODY

"Titties sittin' pretty, and I'm lookin' like a snack," raps the Floridian rapper JT, pictured here, in her 2024 hit "Okay." "40-inch buss down, we know that bitch Black," she continues, synthesizing the bodacious look and spirit of the American baddie. Dress by Dolce & Gabbana.





THE HIPPIES

"Don't forget I was a hippie," says Tonne Goodman as "Everywhere" by Fleetwood Mac reverberates in the studio and a flock of free spirits let loose in some runway designs. As Madonna once said, "You can be a spiritual person and like to go shopping at Prada." First from the left: jacket by Bode. Second from the left: coat by Ann Demeulemeester. Second from the right: top and pants by Alixe of Bohemia. First from the right: dress by Etro. Opposite: First from the left: top by Gabriela Hearst.





THE SWAN

Dynasties are an amalgamation of mythology and pizzazz. Princess Talita von Fürstenberg, an American-born German princess and a Los Angeles and New York City–made It girl, shows us the green light at the end of the dock. Dress, gloves, and earrings by Givenchy by Sarah Burton.

THE ARTISAN

Emily Adams Bode Aujla, the Atlanta-born, Connecticut and New York–based designer and founder of Bode, has given 21st-century traditionalists and green-thumbed fashionistas a new uniform. Clothing by Bode.





THE PREPPIES

Millennial preppies are competitive, determined, and not necessarily polite. They're also not frat kids but a group of rambunctious *Vanity Fair* writers and editors whose remit ranges from politics and crime to style and culture: Lindsey Underwood, Nate Freeman, José Criales-Unzueta, Elise Taylor, Aidan McLaughlin, Chris Murphy, Clara Molot, Daniela Tijerina, and Caitlin Dickson.
First from the left: shoes by Bottega Veneta. Third from the left: clothing by Ralph Lauren. Fourth from the left: sweater-vest and shirt by Dries Van Noten. Fourth from the right: shirts by Ralph Lauren; jeans by Celine. Third from the right: shirt by Alex Mill. Second from the right: sweaters by Ami Paris (argyle) and Rabanne. First from the right: skirt by Coach.

For additional credits, see page 129.





In his four decades as one of fashion's most prolific and dynamic figures, Marc Jacobs has weathered personal storms and professional crises, and come back stronger each time. Now, as his business enters its next era, JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA gets the full story from the king of reinvention

INDELIBLE MARC

PHOTOGRAPHER **JEREMY LIEBMAN**



"All I've ever been is a fashion victim," Marc Jacobs declares. He's sitting in the showroom of his office in SoHo, on the other side of a long glass table. Behind him, on shelves and tables across the glossy black floors, is his commercial collection: the wallets, leather accessories, the new Scene handbags in pastels and bright colors.

"I don't think of that as a bad thing," he clarifies.

It's mid-July, one of the hottest days of the summer, and he is wearing ballet flats, jeans, a zip-up hoodie, and a multipocketed parka, all in black, none by Marc Jacobs. He doesn't come to the city often—he spends most of his time in the 1955 Frank Lloyd Wright house in Rye, New York, purchased in 2019 and in the process of renovation ever since. But he's here today, and he is ready to figure out, in real-time conversation, exactly where he's heading.

In May, word came that after an almost 30-year partnership LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton was selling Marc Jacobs, the label, to a joint venture between brand management company WHP Global and G-III Apparel Group. As part of the deal, Jacobs will also sell his remaining stake in his company. The change marks the end of an era in fashion and portends the beginning of another one for Marc Jacobs, the man.

There have been many eras, and many Marcs: Marc Jacobs debuted in 1984 with a collection of smiley face sweaters and polka-dotted separates that announced his perspective: playful, youthful, high-low, and optimistic. In the '90s, he translated the anti-fashion sentiment of grunge into chiffon dresses and flannel-look silk shirts that mirrored what Kurt Cobain would wear. You can find a black blazer embellished with butterflies—the motif of the era—on eBay for $24,999.

That keen understanding of *right now* is how and why he became, in 1997, the artistic director of Louis Vuitton, launching ready-to-wear and setting the foundation for one of fashion's most recognizable modern brands, years before Zendaya and Rihanna fronted its campaigns. Once upon a time, everything Jacobs touched became a *thing*.

As he has aged from wunderkind to stalwart, Jacobs has weathered scandals and temporary downfalls, with the highs and lows of his brand and his personal life—complicated relationships, drug addiction—and yet he always recovers. If Marc Jacobs has nine lives, he is arguably living his seventh.

At 63, Jacobs is not the most successful American designer of his generation by certain definitions—not the most ubiquitous nor the richest—but he may be the most inspiring, and the most beloved. "A North Star," as Sofia Coppola puts it. Thom Browne calls him "one of the pillars of American fashion." And now there's close to a billion dollars on the line that everything he touches will once again become a *thing*.

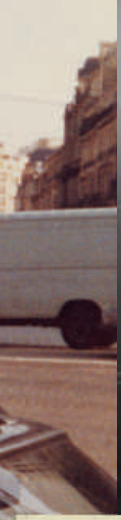


DAYS OF THUNDER At Parsons School of Design, Marc Jacobs was named design student of the year. Soon he would take New York by storm and be featured in the pages of *Vanity Fair*, shot by Steven Meisel.





JACOBS IN PARIS AND ID: COURTESY OF MARC JACOBS INTERNATIONAL/A24. WEDDING: ROBERT FAIRER. KILT: RANDY BROOKE/WIREIMAGE. WITH ANNA SUI: ERIC WEISS/WWD. WITH KATE MOSS AND BROWN TURTLENECK: ROSE HARTMAN VIA GETTY IMAGES (5). WITH SOFIA COPPOLA: JUERGEN TELLER. *VF* SPREAD: STEVEN MEISEL.







Jacobs Makes His Mark



In taking over the top job at Perry Ellis, Marc Jacobs has leapt into the fashion big leagues at the tender age of twenty-five. On the eve of Jacobs's first—flag-waving—collection, BRAD GOOCH trails a style baron in the making

Photographs by STEVEN MEISEL • Styled by MARINA SCHIANO













“WHAT ALL DESIGNERS HAVE TO REALIZE IS THAT **IF YOU DO GOOD WORK, YOU WILL SURVIVE,**” THOM BROWNE SAYS. “AND MARC HAS ALWAYS DONE GOOD WORK.”

ON HIS MARC
“I don’t think anything will ever top that,” Jacobs says of his grunge collection for Perry Ellis that shook fashion in 1992. Photograph by Irving Penn.

"It's become really difficult for me to have a conversation anymore without already going through in my head the different facets of it," Jacobs tells me. This is his first extensive interview about the sale of his label, which is still in process. He appears to still be resolving his feelings about it as we talk.

"There's no yes or no," he says, answering no specific question but musing that there is no singular vision for his brand's future. "It could be this, it could be that. Where am I now? Where are we now? What do we mean to *this* generation of people? *That* generation of people? There's so many questions."

"And I don't have any definitive answers," Jacobs says, taking a hit of his vape, the respectable-looking rechargeable kind, not the disposable ones favored by the younglings buying his handbags off resale sites. "I remain kind of positive, I guess is the easiest way to say it."

Moving from the hands of Bernard Arnault and LVMH to Yehuda Shmidman, chair and CEO of WHP Global, whose fashion vertical includes Vera Wang, G-Star, and Bonobos, and Morris Goldfarb, chairman and CEO of G-III, whose portfolio includes Donna Karan and Karl Lagerfeld, Jacobs says, is perhaps going to be a lesson in "the devil you know versus the devil you don't know."

"When I met Yehuda, he just seemed really enchanted with the idea of Marc Jacobs the company and what we represent," says Jacobs. Shmidman confirms. "Marc is incredibly talented," he tells me over a video call from Hong Kong, "as a founder, as an artist, as just a driver of culture. In many ways, he's one of one."

"IF I DON'T WANT TO ANSWER, I WON'T," JACOBS SAYS, "BUT I'M NOT GOING TO LIE ABOUT IT.... I GET A GOOD FEELING ABOUT BEING HONEST."

By way of their joint agreement, WHP Global and G-III are acquiring Marc Jacobs International from LVMH for at least an estimated $850 million. (LVMH does not disclose brand performance, but a source familiar says Marc Jacobs was profitable at the time of the agreement.)

"It's a big number, and it's warranted," Shmidman says. "It's a big number for a big reason."

Shmidman sees a "very large" prospect to grow the Marc Jacobs business globally. WHP Global, he says, currently owns 16 brands doing $10 billion in retail sales in more than 80 countries. "We have a track record with founders and real fashion talent," he says.

Shmidman, at least on paper, represents the kind of enterprise that someone like Arnault is comfortable doing business with. It's why WHP Global is the acquiring partner in the equation. G-III and Goldfarb, who is an old-school garmento, on the other hand, have a less elegant connotation in the industry: It's the place where once-great brands by great designers like Donna Karan or Halston have, as critics would say, been stripped of their soul. G-III is as much a fashion company as it is an IP machine, and in addition to owning brands, it also operates licenses.

Which is perhaps why Jacobs feels his meeting with Goldfarb went a little differently. "I mean, it's not that he wasn't excited," Jacobs says. "He just seems like a very different personality." And then, "He's just coming from a different place, I think."

"I think there's enough reasonable doubt that says this kind of interference never goes well," Jacobs says, acknowledging skepticism about the new deal. "For people who don't really have all the facts and figures and evidence, I think this just looks like a recipe for something else." In other words, a licensing business.

As Shmidman worked through the deal with LVMH, he struck another one with Goldfarb in which they will each own 50 percent of the Marc Jacobs IP. Per public documents, G-III will invest $425 million in the 50-50 joint venture, also acquiring the operating business of the Marc Jacobs brand and managing the license, which in terms of scale means proliferating product. As in: *More Marc Jacobs coming to a retailer near you.* He expects the deal to close by October at the latest.

During our conversation, Goldfarb seems attuned to the wariness but prepared with counterpoints. He suggests the successes G-III had scaling Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger with their owner, PVH, as a licensor, and their ongoing revamp of Donna Karan as proof of their commitment. "You'll find that, uniquely, we have a level of respect for each brand individually," Goldfarb says of his approach.

He hopes for Jacobs to remain as involved as he'd like to: "The more he is willing to give, the more we will take," Goldfarb says. "We are not the adversary, we're his partners."

While Shmidman did not disclose certain details of Jacobs's new setup, such as his compensation or contract terms, he underscores that Jacobs's presence is crucial, and that WHP and G-III are inheriting the infrastructure built by LVMH, through which Jacobs remains creative director.

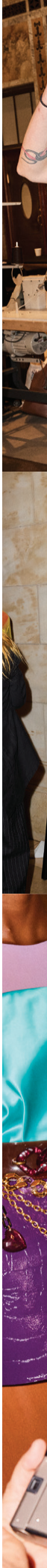
"We're the beneficiary of walking into a business that has been owned by LVMH," Shmidman says. "LVMH is of the highest integrity and certainly brilliant at working with founders, creative talent, fashion designers. Marc is all of the above."

Goldfarb knows moments of transition can be unnerving. "I think Marc might be a little nervous as to where it goes," Goldfarb says. "I think if you call Marc back in 18 months, he's going to say, 'This is heaven.' "

Jacobs implies that his brand's relationship with LVMH was no utopia. "When people hear LVMH, they hear about this luxury titan kind of thing, but they don't know the everyday operation," he says. "I'm not going to put them down, but [people] don't know about all the different CEOs we've had over the years, and they don't know about all the mistakes that were made by people that [LVMH] employed," he says. "The reality of it is that just because you're LVMH doesn't mean you don't have a shit ton of problems with people you're employing."

"LVMH has kept us and done the least possible they can in terms of growing our business," Jacobs says bluntly, though he doesn't fault them for it. He knows that the conglomerate's priorities lie with its crown jewels, like Louis Vuitton and Christian Dior. Arnault and LVMH have arguably been patient with Jacobs. He spoke fondly of Arnault when the sale was announced: "I am forever grateful to Bernard Arnault for his support, belief and trust in me over the last 30 years. It has been an honor and privilege to work alongside the Arnault Family and LVMH." But it's clear there are feelings, and maybe a little hurt, or at least disappointment.

"There's no question that the industry has respect for Marc, that LVMH has respect for Marc," says Shmidman, pointing to

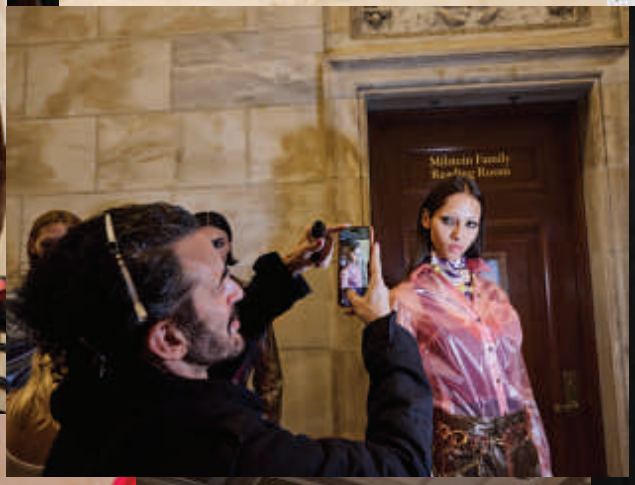


















VIBE SHIFT
After news came in May that LVMH was selling Marc Jacobs, the brand, to WHP Global and G-III Apparel Group in a joint agreement, Jacobs's show at the New York Public Library in June took on a new meaning.





LOVE OF THE GAME
"It's never been commercially successful," Jacobs says of his runway collections. "We don't make money on runway. And I doubt anybody really does."

Arnault's announcement of the sale: "Marc Jacobs is a designer of rare creativity and unique vision," Arnault said at the time. "His impact on the world of fashion is undeniable, and I want to warmly thank him for his contribution to the success of the Maison and the LVMH Group over the last 30 years. I am confident that this new chapter will offer new avenues of opportunity for Marc Jacobs, that the brand and its designer will continue to inspire customers and creators around the world."

"It's quite revealing that the respect there from Mr. Arnault himself and LVMH as an institution to Marc the person is incredible," says Shmidman. "It's really powerful."

In response to Jacobs's comments in *Vanity Fair,* a representative for LVMH said that "the Marc Jacobs brand and business has been an important Maison of the LVMH Group for almost 30 years. LVMH has, as with all its Maisons, always supported it—along with Marc's very important runway shows—with appropriate and substantial resources, both financially and in personnel, over all this time, as demonstrated by the great success it has achieved over the recent past."

A significant pep squad in the fashion world wants Jacobs to continue putting up his runway presentations, but the general anxiety is that the new owners may have different, more commercial priorities.

"What he really does is shows," says stylist Alastair McKimm, who has worked with Jacobs since the pandemic. "He doesn't make collections for anything but his runway. That then obviously trickles down into the culture, not only of the company, but of fashion in general."

Jacobs says he's been clear with Shmidman and Goldfarb about his desire to continue showing. "They say they want to, and I try to trust people who say something," Jacobs says.

Goldfarb assures me that they plan on keeping Jacobs's runway shows for the foreseeable future.

"We're not terminating those," he says, even if "it may not be a forever situation." He believes Jacobs to be "instrumental" in the creative side of the business. "The goal is not to get rid of the talent and get rid of all the marketing spend and bring it to prosperity operating on fumes," he says. "The intent is actually the inverse."

Jacobs's role today, in addition to being the showman, is to mastermind his fragrance and beauty lines, the latter of which was relaunched earlier this year with a hefty investment from Coty. (The deal with G-III and WHP includes the fragrance and beauty businesses. Coty will keep its license, but it will now partner with the joint venture.)

"Let's be honest about what this is," Jacobs says. His runway collections have "never been commercially successful. We don't make money on runway. And I doubt anybody really does."

The point, as he sees it, is to put on a show "that hopefully will motivate and stimulate and inspire the people that work with Marc Jacobs, the editors and the fashion people. It will give them energy."

It's refreshing, rewarding even, to hear Jacobs say the quiet part out loud.

Jacobs was born in 1963 to a secular Jewish family in New York City. His father, who was a talent agent, died when he was six. In the aftermath, Jacobs was raised on the Upper West Side by his grandmother; he has described his mother as both mentally ill and largely uninvolved in the lives of himself and his two younger siblings. He attended the High School of Art and Design in Manhattan and college at the Parsons School of Design on the recommendation of Perry Ellis. In 1984, Jacobs was named design student of the year and won the Perry Ellis Gold Thimble Award, as well as the Chester Weinberg Gold Thimble Award for his graduating collection.

Impressed with his work, fashion-industry impresario Robert Duffy contacted Jacobs. After several attempts at starting a line together, Jacobs and Duffy landed at Perry Ellis, where the former was appointed designer of womenswear and the latter became an executive following the death of Ellis himself in 1986.

What follows from this point has been recorded in magazine profiles, blogs, and in two documentaries. *Marc Jacobs & Louis Vuitton* (2007) tracks the designer's gutsy overhaul of the storied French label, which until Jacobs's arrival was known as a historic luxury trunkmaker. *Marc by Sofia* (2025) traces his life and career through the lens of a close friend.

The first time Jacobs was profiled in *Vanity Fair* was 1989, in the run-up to his first show for Perry Ellis. Even then, Jacobs's exacting vision, and his tension with his own industry, was apparent.

"I have to give this *time,* and everybody else does, and that's my biggest worry," Jacobs told the writer Brad Gooch. "Donna Karan worked at Anne Klein how many years before she got her own label? Ralph Lauren just celebrated his 20th anniversary. I remember when I was 11 years old looking at Calvin Klein clothes," he continued. "You're not given this kind of time by the press or the buyers anymore. It's immediate gratification for everything." (Today Ralph Lauren approaches nearly 60 years in business.)

In 1992, Jacobs presented what is now known as his grunge collection for Perry Ellis. It was generally panned by critics, and fashion lore holds that it got Jacobs, who was 29 at the time, fired, something he denies. The same annals now recognize that show as one of the defining moments of his career, which Jacobs himself has never doubted. "That show and that time was the most indicative of feeling part of a greater creative wave that represented a change," Jacobs says today. "I don't think anything will ever top that."

Jacobs changed the trajectory of fashion for a second time in the 2000s by delivering the kinds of art collaborations that are now an industry standard: with Stephen Sprouse in the spring-summer 2001 collection, followed by Takashi Murakami in 2003 spring-summer, both for Louis Vuitton. (These It bags were so successful that the brand launched a re-edition Murakami collection in 2025.) This was Jacobs's Warhol moment—the bags are his Campbell's soup cans. But in private, his life was unraveling.

The first time Jacobs went to rehab for heroin and cocaine addiction was at the behest of Duffy in 1999. He went again, this time of his own volition, in 2007. Jacobs knew he had to grow up, but he did so in the style of the celebrities of that time—Paris Hilton, Lindsay Lohan, Britney Spears—with every misstep plastered across the tabloids. And he did it with panache: Once, *Page Six* reported that Jacobs had hosted an orgy with men he invited off Grindr. His response? To superimpose a shirtless photo of himself over the app's logo and post it on Instagram, bidding Grindr farewell with a wink: "It was fun for 'group' get togethers."

Another time, one of the nude photos he had meant to DM a man on Instagram ended up on his feed by mistake.

"I remember the Grindr thing was such a big deal," he says now, laughing. "I'm like, Yes, I'm a gay designer who likes to have sex. What can I tell you?"

He's never been particularly afraid to reflect. "It excites me to be open, and it excites me to reveal things that somebody else would keep secret," Jacobs says. "If I don't want to answer, I won't," he says, "but I'm not going to lie about CONTINUED ON PAGE 128

STAND BY ME

In her latest monograph, GRACE CODDINGTON remembers her closest confidant and *Vanity Fair*'s onetime fashion director, Michael Roberts

When my second marriage fell apart, my dear friend Michael Roberts moved into my large brownstone in Fulham, London—the house my husband Willie Christie and I shared for many years before the breakup. Very soon, Michael had me out clubbing every night until the wee small hours, and when we got home we stayed awake till dawn, plotting, dissecting, and gossiping about who we'd found attractive. Inevitably, we'd both fancied the same guy. I gave Michael the spare room at the top of the house, and although it was only three short flights of stairs, he seldom climbed higher than the living room sofa on the ground floor.

Most mornings, I'd drive him to his office at *The Sunday Times,* then circle back to the parking garage under Vogue House, where my own daily circus awaited. I got to know him pretty well during that time. We only once had a real falling out, when he did a very unflattering drawing of me for his column. A rear view in a very, very tight Azzedine Alaïa with the caption "There are certain fashion editors who should know better...." It was unmistakably me: huge frizzy hair and a big bottom! My vanity was shaken, but I never gave up wearing that skirt.

Excerpted from *Grace: Now* © 2026 by Grace Coddington. Reproduced by permission of Phaidon. All rights reserved.

He came for a week and stayed nine months, until my divorce papers arrived and we both had to move out. There were even rumors that he might be named as a corespondent in the divorce—unlikely, of course—but it gave us plenty to laugh about. Michael promised that if ever he was called to court, he'd give such a camp performance, it would be Oscar-worthy.

In my new apartment he painted the four seasons around the fireplace. Michael was endlessly creative: He made pottery, designed rugs that looked like the work of Miró or Picasso, wrote poetry, and made many beautiful books of his drawings and cutouts for both adults and children. He penned lyrics to the tune of "In an English Country Garden" for an animated film I once made. He helped reinvent *Tatler* under Tina Brown and served as fashion director for both *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker.* He brought elegance and irreverence in equal measure, and he did it all with paper, scissors, and a glint in his eye. And most remarkably, he ghostwrote *Grace: A Memoir,* completely inhabiting my character and capturing my voice. Though I adore the book, it was a challenging year, with many arguments and debates about the facts of my narrative and life.

Michael would often vanish for a month or two, then suddenly materialize in Brazil or Sicily. He also came to stay with me in my country house in the Hamptons while writing my memoir so that he could better interrogate me for hours on end, complain about my



ARTHUR ELGORT.



DESERT FOR TWO
Grace Coddington and Michael Roberts on set at El Mirage Dry Lake, June 2000.

cooking, and generally drive me mad. Sometimes, I just had to get in my Mini Cooper, drive to the end of the road, and scream. He would stay up all night with every light in the house on and *The Simpsons* blasting on the TV. But somehow the book got finished.

My last memory of Michael is from his 70th birthday in Sicily, where he had relocated. I flew out to surprise him. He was radiant, wearing a paper crown he had made himself, smoking a big fat cigar, and generally holding court. He had just been honored by the Queen of England with a CBE for his contribution to fashion. Sadly, he never got to accept his award.

Michael was always there for me—this book is the first project I've attempted without him. I hope he approves. VF



THE AFTER-PARTY
Haider Ackermann sees his Tom Ford as the aftermath of a very good night. Here he is in Paris with a host of his close confidants, including Susie Cave, Kate Moss, Daphne Guinness, Kristen McMenamy, Lee Pace, Countess Setsuko Klossowska de Rola, Justin Padgett, Antoine Waldner, and Scott Barnhill.

PHOTOGRAPHER **SEBASTIÁN FAENA**

A SINGULAR MAN



PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY PERROTTE PRODUCTION. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

Haider Ackermann was surprised when, in 2024, he received a call from Tom Ford, the man, summoning him to lead Tom Ford, the house. But he did not find it strange.

"There's always been this flirtation between Mr. Ford and I, workwise," he says. Ackermann, 55, had already built a respectable career, but the opportunity to enter the pantheon of the greats had eluded him until now.

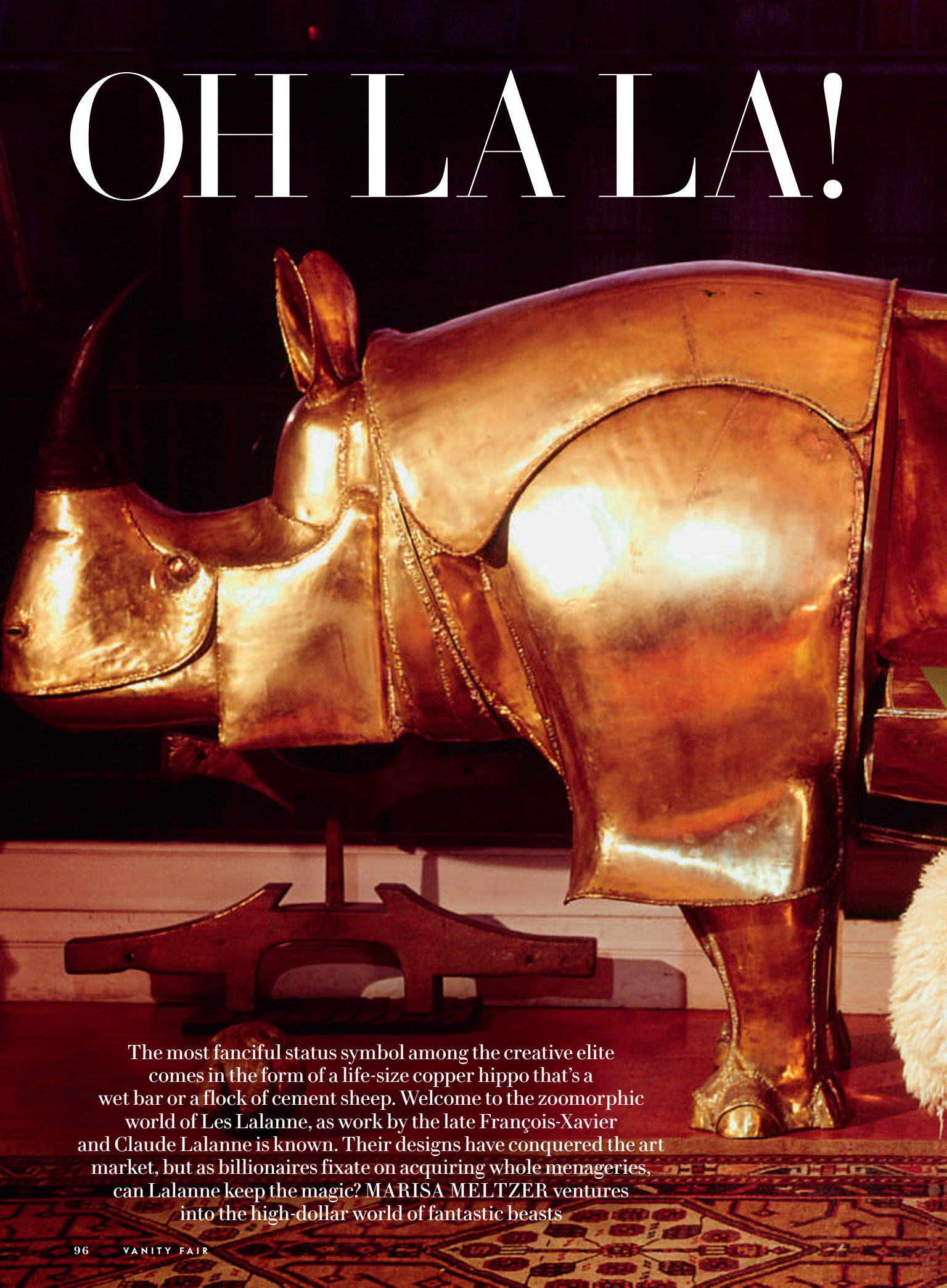
"Getting a phone call from Mr. Ford and listening to his voice," that deep, resonant baritone, "that is seduction," Ackermann says. "If I want to take my role seriously, I have to embrace that and seduce us all,"

While the Paris-based, Colombian-born Ackermann says he is "terribly shy," his collections are anything but. They are dangerously alluring, but Ackermann acknowledges that times have changed since the '90s, when Ford brazenly sold sex as fashion. Brands today need nuance to be titillating—nudity and provocation are too available. But his runway shows exude desire: Models cruise one another, a performance that has hypnotized his audience. No other designer has synthesized erotic tension with such aplomb since Ford himself.

Sebastián Faena and I met Ackermann and his raucous entourage after his runway show in March. Supermodels Kate Moss and Kristen McMenamy tussled for the spotlight. Lee Pace and Daphne Guinness were enraptured by their conversation. But with the help of a few martinis and the promise of the dinner that followed, the group sat for a portrait. Chaos is the norm chez Ackermann. "Everything is insane," he says. But you won't hear him complain: "It's like when you're in love, you just don't count the hours. I hope I stay in love for a long time."

—JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA

OH LA LA!



The most fanciful status symbol among the creative elite comes in the form of a life-size copper hippo that's a wet bar or a flock of cement sheep. Welcome to the zoomorphic world of Les Lalanne, as work by the late François-Xavier and Claude Lalanne is known. Their designs have conquered the art market, but as billionaires fixate on acquiring whole menageries, can Lalanne keep the magic? MARISA MELTZER ventures into the high-dollar world of fantastic beasts

LALANNE!



ZOOTOPIA
A large brass rhinoceros designed by François-Xavier Lalanne is used as a desk by a boy in Paris in 1967. It has a piggy bank head with coin drops in the ears.

Last April, Sotheby's threw a preview party at its New York headquarters at the Breuer Building for an auction of design pieces from the collectors Jean and Terry de Gunzburg. There was a string trio playing classical music, custom Lalanne leaf-shaped cocktail napkins, and a raw bar full of oysters. In the middle of the warren of rooms was the star of the show, a set of 15 bronze mirrors by the French artist Claude Lalanne. They lined the candlelit room like the hall of mirrors in Versailles, but upon closer glance they had a surreal bent with vines, leaves, birds, and built-in candelabras, intricacies made all the more apparent by the Breuer's stark, almost foreboding Brutalist architecture.

The mirror set had originally been designed for Yves Saint Laurent's Paris home. In 2009, the de Gunzburgs purchased them for about $2.2 million at the Yves Saint Laurent–Pierre Bergé auction at Christie's. "I was seated next to her," the famous interior designer Jacques Grange tells me of his influence on his friend and client Terry de Gunzburg's bidding. When she'd hesitate as the price soared, "I said, 'Don't stop, don't stop, don't stop.' " The problem was they were never installed. They're enormous and require a very specific kind of room. Now the mirrors were being auctioned again and were estimated to go for as high as $15 million. A woman on the elevator leaving wondered aloud if they could be sold broken up. Someone with her laughed and said, "Anything for the right price," but they were both wrong. If you had to ask, you didn't stand a chance.



The next day the auction room crackled with energy, filled with le tout New York—employees from every Sotheby's department and, from the greater art world, every relationship manager, every major art advisory, and every notable gallery—sitting for what they knew would be a blockbuster sale. One person in the audience counted seven bidders and guessed that anyone serious about winning would have been advised to go way, way above the estimate. Specialists on the phone with their clients kept their paddles in the air as the bids inched higher and higher. In the end, the set went for $33.5 million, the highest auction price ever not just for a Lalanne, but any design work ever.

"There is some kind of Lalanne fever going on. It's become the status symbol," says Jodi Pollack, who spearheaded the auction as Sotheby's chairman and co-worldwide head of 20th century design. "Alors, Lalanne, Lalanne, Lalanne! It's poétique, it's interesting, it's unique. In Asia, in America, everyone wants Lalanne," says Grange. Lalanne mania extended this spring to Christie's, where *Pomme de Ben*—an apple with a monkey on the stem—sold in May for $8.73 million, up from $5.2 million five years prior. In December a hippo-shaped bar by François-Xavier Lalanne made in 1976 sold for $31.4 million at Sotheby's. Major auction winners have the choice to go public about their victories, but most choose to stay anonymous. Rumors swirled that Jeff Bezos bought the hippo. "I can't confirm or deny that," says Pollack with a shake of her head that seems to strongly imply he hadn't. Even at the Met Gala this past spring, Lalanne made an if-you-know-you-know cameo: Hailey Bieber wore a Saint Laurent gown inspired by a dress from Saint Laurent's fall-winter 1969 haute couture collection, which he designed in collaboration with Claude Lalanne.

Les Lalanne, as work by the late married couple is collectively known, doesn't need any individual collector at this point. It's easy to spot, often in brass, mostly furniture or sculptures of animals and plants, with more than a hint of fairy tale: a desk in the form of a rhino, a bed in the shape of a bird, a seat in the shape of a camel, a fork in the shape of a ginkgo leaf. Headline writers like to use words like *menageries* and *beasts* to describe it. Les Lalanne have been collected by the French fashion scene since the 1960s, not just by Saint Laurent, but by the Rothschilds, whose 1972 Surrealist Ball was both attended by and featured costuming from Les Lalanne, most infamously the fluted bronze bust and face covering worn by collector Charlotte Aillaud. Other key members of the midcentury Paris social set loved their Lalannes: the Agnellis, the Noailles, Gunter Sachs, the Schlumbergers, Karl Lagerfeld, Valentino Garavani, and Serge Gainsbourg; art collectors like the de Gunzburgs and Jane Holzer and the architect Peter Marino were also early champions. And then, about two decades ago, another wave of younger collectors emerged who helped spread the fervor around America, such as the fashion designer Reed Krakoff, Moda Operandi cofounder Lauren Santo Domingo, and Dasha Zhukova.

Now that Les Lalanne have proven themselves to be big business at auction houses, the question is whether their legacy can be seen as more than just design, but fine art. And maybe more importantly, are they becoming the Birkin bag of the art world, something once acquired as a signifier of good taste, now coveted by everyone with enough money? Or, as Caroline Hamisky Lalanne, Claude's eldest daughter, puts it on the phone from France, "Now you have people who don't know anyone with a lot of money who want a Les Lalanne."

François-Xavier Lalanne, who was born in 1927, started working in the late 1940s as a guard in the Louvre's Egyptian and Assyrian galleries. But that was just a day job—he was an artist who had a Montparnasse studio next door to Constantin Brancusi and where Man Ray worked. In the 1950s, François-Xavier worked at an architecture firm where Claude's husband also worked. The two began a dalliance in 1952 and married in 1967, bringing three daughters for Claude and one daughter for François-Xavier to the relationship.

The family lived in Ury, France, south of Paris, near Fontainebleau, which is famous for its royal palace and almost mystical



PORTRAIT AND FRAME: CLAUDE AND FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LALANNE. PORTRAIT WITH CAMELS: PIERRE BOULAT/COSMOS. VALENTINO: LUKAS WASSMANN. CLAUDE AND YSL: MANUEL LITRAN/PARIS MATCH/GETTY IMAGES. PREVIOUS SPREAD: CARLO BAVAGNOLI/LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK.







WILD AND WOOLLY
Clockwise from top: François-Xavier and Claude Lalanne sitting on camels in a sand quarry near their home in 1976; Valentino Garavani in Gstaad, Switzerland, with his flock of sheep; Yves Saint Laurent (right) adjusting a winter 1969 collection gown featuring breastplates by Claude. Opposite: a portrait of Claude taken by François-Xavier in a frame made by Claude.



FURTHER REFLECTION
Clockwise from top left: an ensemble of mirrors for Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé; Serge Gainsbourg with a sculpture by Claude in 1982; sketches by Claude from *The Paris Review;* Reed Krakoff's daughter playing among the sheep at their East Hampton home in 2011; Claude's *Pomme de New York* and François-Xavier's *Oiseau de nuit (grand)* on Park Avenue in New York in 2009; a sheep in the window of Bergdorf's in 2006; Gunter Sachs's Gstaad pool.

woods. First they bought a house, then property on the other side of the street, turning their compound into something almost like a farm, with a lot of small stone buildings, including Claude's and François-Xavier's studios, and a large garden. Their sculptures were scattered throughout the inside and outside, with a bronze elongated deer to sit on in front of a fire and massive human-size lily sculptures in the garden. But there was also the banal: a bronze paper towel holder one of them made because they simply needed it.

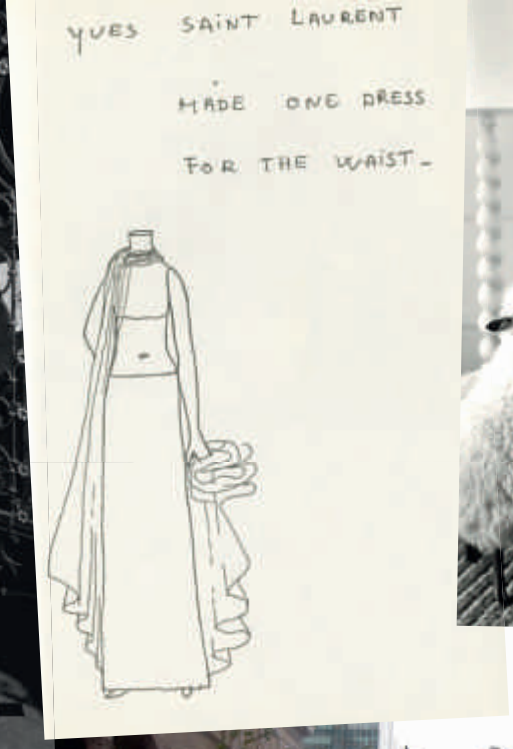
Claude worked with galvanized materials, which meant coating organic material in copper or bronze and dipping it in an electroplating bath, which burns out the organic material and leaves a metallicized version of what was once there. She would gather branches or leaves from her property and put each separately in the bath and assemble her work, like the Saint Laurent mirror set, piece by piece. François-Xavier knew how to weld, but he also sculpted in clay and plaster molds and then cast his large, usually zoomorphic pieces. An easy way to tell them apart is that his oeuvre is mostly large and made up of animals, while hers, smaller and more detailed, takes inspiration from the plant world. "They worked all day, with the assistants arriving in the morning, maybe into the night with a trip into Paris for dinner. They never rested," says Caroline.

Perhaps the most remarkable part was that, in this postwar time when few women, let alone the wives of fellow artists, were given much due, Claude Lalanne was a sculptor in her own right. "François-Xavier had no need or interest in overshadowing or putting her aside. It was his idea to call their work 'Les Lalanne,'" says Paul B. Franklin, a Paris-based independent curator. "She wasn't going to let being a mother or being married derail her. There was room for all of it. It just doesn't mean that was easy." Terry de Gunzburg agrees. "Maybe Claude was more sensitive to not being recognized as a major artist. François-Xavier had more distance. They were workaholics; nothing came by chance."

Soon, Claude began to work on a larger scale. She had been

DRAWINGS: CLAUDE LALANNE/PARIS REVIEW/© 2026 ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY, NY/ADAGP, PARIS. YSL HOME: JEAN-LUC LUYSSEN/GAMMA-RAPHO/GETTY IMAGES. GAINSBOURG: TONY FRANK.













APPLE AND OWL: DON EMMERT/AFP/GETTY IMAGES. POOL: UNITED ARCHIVES GMBH/ALAMY. MIRROR: COURTESY OF SOTHEBY'S. YOUNG GIRL AND SHEEP: MANNEQUIN: COURTESY OF REED KRAKOFF.

making smaller pieces, such as cutlery and necklaces, and in the '60s she started branching out, making life-size casts of people, usually using friends and family as models, including Caroline, her daughter, while pregnant.

Les Lalanne were not only bucking a wave of 1950s domesticity, they were also going against the prevailing currents of that era's art. They weren't making abstract work, but something more in debt to the Surrealists who came before. And their association with the world of fashion wasn't considered very high art. In the 1960s, Les Lalanne worked on the windows at Dior in Paris, which is where they originally met Saint Laurent. "She was modern, very funny, she loved seducing people, charming, putting on some makeup, going to dinner.... She was a true character," says Olivier Bialobos, the chief communications and image officer at Dior, who met Les Lalanne decades ago. He remembers a doctor telling her to stop smoking, so she decided to stop, but only indoors, and hid the cigarettes under the couch cushions.

It was a warm and fun way of country life. "Like any couple, they fought—I thought it was funny the idea that they even fought," says Jane Holzer, their friend and collector. He was more reserved and kind and enjoyed telling jokes, while she was more direct, a bon vivant. "They were just them, they worked all day, they ate well," Holzer says. Everyone who talks about spending time at the Lalanne home mentions the food: fraises des bois that Claude loved, good cheese, sausage, lots of wine. "Claude, she could drink a guy under the table," adds Holzer. "One night we started out with vodka, and I honestly don't know how many she had. And then a few bottles of very good red wine and she was not even drunk, and I think she was 92 years old. I mean, that's my girl, come on. I would swallow three glasses of wine and be under the table!" Stories of their drinking prowess abound. "They were both chitty-chatty, great company, and they thought nothing of downing two bottles of wine. I was like, just a minute, I gotta crawl home," says Marino.



“ALORS, LALANNE, LALANNE, LALANNE!
IT’S POÉTIQUE, IT’S INTERESTING, IT’S UNIQUE. IN ASIA, IN AMERICA,
EVERYONE WANTS LALANNE.”

—JACQUES GRANGE



GULLY GEE
A woman reading on a seagull canopy bed in Paris, 1967.



HEAPS OF SHEEPS
Top: *Unique Structure Végétale Bed* by Claude, on display as part of the Pauline Karpidas 2025 showcase at Sotheby's. From left: "Sheep Station," a 2013 exhibition of 25 of François-Xavier's iconic epoxy stone and bronze "Moutons"; Gainsbourg's 1976 album *L'Homme à tête de chou*, featuring cover art showcasing a surreal bronze sculpture by Claude; a rare 1970s poster featuring François-Xavier's rhinoceros on gold paper. Opposite: François-Xavier's hippo bar.

The country-house visits were a way to sell things. Or gift things. "I would go and see them and see something beautiful and just fall in love and ask permission. I was very polite. Maybe that's the problem," says Holzer, who got a fuzzy sheep that way. If you were particularly lucky, you got a piece customized while you visited. Claude had a series called Pomme Bouche, of an apple with a cast of a model's mouth. Reed Krakoff and his wife, Delphine, sat for one. As did Marino, but with a more disastrous result. "She did all of the most famous women in Paris, London, and New York and said, 'I'd love to do your lips,'" he says. "She put Vaseline on my lips with her spatula and hot wax. She said, 'This is so awkward, but I've never done it with someone who has a beard.' It took two hours of steaming water, and I had wax in my mustache for three weeks." He thinks it's the ugliest one she made; he still has it on his dining table.

"What they were doing was so different and so new because they used to sell directly to high-society families, which was totally out of the box," says de Gunzburg. The early collectors were people with a great deal of cultural capital. They were tastemakers. Even if their worst detractors considered Les Lalanne mere decor collected by socialites, the support of famous people was helpful in their careers. "It helped legitimize their practice at a time when their work at the crossroads of sculpture and design could still seem unconventional. More importantly, it created a ripple effect: Seeing these works within such demanding collections naturally sparked the curiosity and interest of other collectors, enthusiasts, and institutions," says Florent Jeanniard, the Paris-based chairman and co-worldwide head of design at Sotheby's.

BED: ZUMA PRESS/ALAMY LIVE NEWS. GAINSBOURG RECORD: ALAMY. PREVIOUS SPREAD: CARLO BAVAGNOLI/LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/SHUTTERSTOCK. SHEEP STATION: BILLY FAR RELL/BFA.COM.



WRITERS LIKE TO USE WORDS LIKE
MENAGERIES AND *BEASTS*
TO DESCRIBE THE JUXTAPOSITIONS OF FAIRY TALE:
A DESK IN THE FORM OF A RHINO, A BED IN
THE SHAPE OF A BIRD, A SEAT IN THE SHAPE OF A CAMEL,
A FORK IN THE SHAPE OF A GINKGO LEAF.

POSTER: COURTESY CHAIRISH. HIPPO: COURTESY OF LAUREN SANTO DOMINGO. NEXT PAGE: BERRY BERENSON. DAVID MASSEY.

The couple certainly had their bona fide art-world champions. They were represented in Paris by the gallerist Alexander Iolas, who also worked with René Magritte, Max Ernst, and Andy Warhol. Iolas organized their first exhibition in the United States, at the Art Institute of Chicago, in 1967. In 1976 the Whitechapel Gallery in London raised their profile in the UK with a Les Lalanne show called "Domesticated Beasts & Other Creatures."

Over in New York, Marino started collecting them in the mid-'80s, when he bought a set of alligator chairs for $45,000. They may have been cheaper then, he noted, but "they were *never* inexpensive." He thinks the key to the success of the artists is how easy it is to live with their work. "Alligator chairs are somewhat more aesthetic than a Duchamp urinal. I don't have one of those in my living room, but I do have alligator chairs," he says, adding, "I am kind of known for putting them on the map and their largest collector."

Although many people credit themselves as the reason for the Lalannes' current moment, Marino was the only one brave enough to stake his reputation on the record. He does have pieces scattered around his home in Southampton, 35 inside and 20 outside, among them a set of cutlery and a frog fountain complete with lily pads. (For all their artistic prowess, Les Lalanne were not always focused on the details. Another piece came to New York with water pumps wired for French electricity.) Asking which is his favorite would be like asking to choose his favorite child, but since Marino has just one daughter, that's a much simpler question to answer. After some thinking, he decides his favorite is a piece he asked Claude to surprise him with one year, and she delivered him a bench made of bronze hydrangeas, inspired by his garden.

Toward the end of Claude's life, Marino called her every Sunday to talk about everything and nothing. His last commission for her

was a staircase at Cheval Blanc hotel in Paris. François-Xavier died at home in Ury in 2008, and she died in Fontainebleau in 2019. In the years following her death in particular, there appears to be a contentious relationship between their daughters. One indication was that Dorothée Lalanne and Marie Lalanne consigned separate collections to be auctioned—Dorothée to Sotheby's in 2021 and 2022 and Christie's in 2024, and Marie to Christie's in 2022. One can imagine the burden of splitting up a valuable estate and the myriad decisions about how to run it posthumously, such as whether to license the name or make reproductions. Do they want to be focused on preservation, like Donald Judd's estate, or countless contemporary collaborations, like the Keith Haring estate? Holzer observed of the sisters that "until [both parents] died it was much friendlier between them. You know what money does to families." Their own family do not disagree. "Money doesn't buy happiness," says Julie Hamisky, Caroline's daughter and Claude's granddaughter, who became a bronze artist using the same techniques. "After [Claude] passed, it was a big shock and a mess for everybody and their relationships."



From the beginning of their artistic careers as Les Lalanne in the 1960s until about the end of the 1990s, Lalanne was collected by a small but influential group of people, but by the mid-2000s the market for them became bigger and more global. One reason was two major New York City installations: a Park Avenue show that featured their work outside among skyscrapers, and "Sheep Station," an installation of cement sheep at a gas station in Chelsea. The 2009 Saint Laurent–Pierre Bergé auction set a new level of prices and notoriety. François-Xavier's large, animal-oriented work was historically fetching higher prices than Claude's, but the sale of the mirrors put their work at more or less equal value.

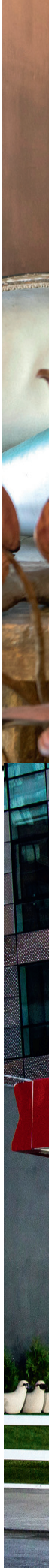
The current prices—is it an art-market bubble?—for Lalanne has created a situation where collectors are eager to prove they bought early on, to show they aren't mere trend followers, and also that they didn't overpay. Dasha Zhukova owns the polymorph cat from 1968, a fantastical feline-shaped sculpture with sides that open like wings. She's had it for about 17 years. "I use it as a bar," she says. "Everyone has a reaction to it. It definitely feels immersive, intellectual, and emotional at the same time. Collectors today don't really separate art and design, especially younger collectors. They see them as part of the same cultural conversation, and Lalanne perfectly sits at that intersection, blurring the line between design and contemporary art."

Lauren Santo Domingo owns a hippo bar cart and explains to people that hers was purchased in the mid-'90s. "We were not one of those people who paid an outrageous sum; the hippo has been a member of our family for many years. It's in every Christmas photo. The shipping probably cost more than the actual piece," says Santo Domingo. "It was acquired, if the lore is to be believed, by my mother-in-law and father-in-law, when they went to lunch at the Lalanne home in the countryside and drank a lot of white wine. At the end of the lovely lunch, it was customary to purchase something, and in this case it was a life-size hippo." She recently posted a photo of it being used for caviar and cocktails. Her family also has a few Lalanne cement sheep in the garden.

The sheep (both cement for outside and woolly for inside) are probably the most recognizable and widely available pieces they made and have ranged in resale value from $250,000 two decades ago to $2.5 million for a pair in the de Gunzburg sale. Gunter Sachs had a flock of them in his living room at the Palace Hotel in St. Moritz. A Madison Avenue boutique has a dozen or so clearly fake ones (perhaps a more polite term is "inspired by") in its window. Michael's restaurant in midtown Manhattan had a real one in the bar area for years that was removed for cleaning a couple of years ago and has not been seen since.

The sheep became as ubiquitous as a Cartier Love bracelet. Or perhaps not common, but akin to the $10,000 wavy fluorescent pink Ettore Sottsass Ultrafragola mirror that has now been knocked off so many times that it's almost embarrassing to have shelled out to buy one. Or imagine wiring a gallery hundreds of thousands, if not millions, for the *wrong* kind of Lalanne. One unapologetic snob with a master's degree in art saw a photo of a minor François-Xavier animal sculpture in a rich arriviste's home and sniffed that she should have known better, or at least been better advised. The collector should have bought a Claude piece, which conveys better taste, or a major work from François-Xavier, like a bar. An art adviser who doesn't like Lalanne or the type of person who is drawn to them said that their worst pieces have no conceptual content. "They're follies that look nice and polite in a room." A longtime collector admitted, "A lot of it is not great, and some of it is kitschy." He sighed and said, "It's disappointing to have all these billionaires buy it to just buy it." Another Lalanne owner had a family member tell her, "Giacometti is for the city and Lalanne is for the country" when she saw hers installed in her home. At one point when a few Lalanne pieces sold for a great deal of money, she considered selling hers, but her husband predicted it would just keep going up in value and said, "We'll be the assholes who sold it."

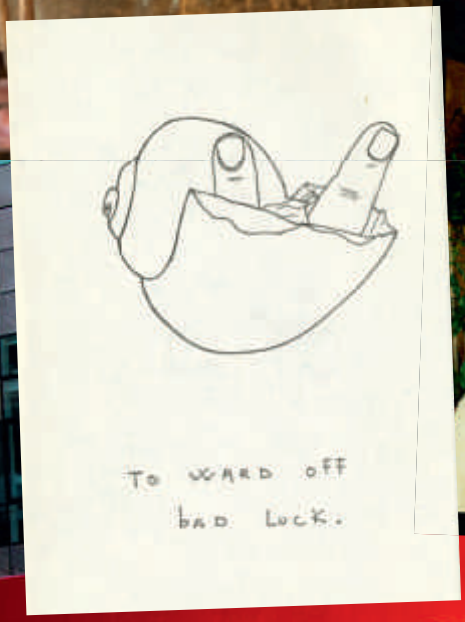
Maybe part of the frenzy might be chalked up to the idea that in times of uncertainty, people want to collect pieces that feel solid, both literally and figuratively. And the craftsmanship and sheer price of materials alone of the bronze that Lalanne used show time and value. But that line of thinking also leads to another. For the would-be tastemaker or future collector, there is only one question. "What is the next Lalanne? That's what everybody is trying to figure out," says Jodi Pollack of Sotheby's. "Their dream was to be accepted as not doing furniture but as artists. They would talk to me about that all the time," says Holzer. Les Lalanne have proven themselves in the market and the art world, at last, but Holzer still has a word of warning for future collectors of the woolly sheep, alligator chairs, hippo bar carts, and all other whimsical forms straight from the minds of François-Xavier and Claude: "People will sit on it whether you like it or not." VF



DRAWING: CLAUDE LALANNE/PARIS REVIEW/© 2026 ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS)/ADAGP, PARIS. MARINO: LUC CASTEL. SHEEP STATION: COURTESY OF OLNEY GLEASON GALLERY. WINDOW: COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN DIOR. ROTHSCHILD HOME: HORST P. HORST/CONDÉ NAST/GETTY IMAGES.









WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
Clockwise from top left: Peter Marino poses in Claude's studio in 2018; a Dior display in Paris circa 1961; sheep sculptures at an outdoor "gas station" exhibit; a Claude sketch; sheep at the Winter Garden at Ferrières, the Rothschilds' weekend home, photographed for *Vogue* in 1978. Opposite: François-Xavier's *Grand Chat polymorphe*, an animal with the body of a cat, tail of a fish, wings of a bird, and hooves of a bull.





PHOTOGRAPHER **SEBASTIÁN FAENA**



FLOW STATE

Since taking charge of the storied French fashion house in 2023, Chemena Kamali has brought the bohemian dream back to Chloé. JOSÉ CRIALES-UNZUETA joins the designer and her army of muses

Chemena Kamali wears her long chocolate brown hair all the way down over her shoulders to the waistband of her blue jeans. And every time I've encountered her, she's been beaming a smile. Kamali, who was born and raised in Germany, studied for her masters in London, and now resides in Paris as the creative director of Chloé, has the soft, melancholic presence of a Pre-Raphaelite muse. But at work, the designer is ferocity personified: a sharp, unwavering perfectionist.

Before we spoke for this story, Kamali inquired about the format—a written-through profile or a question-and-answer session—to better calibrate the flow of her responses. And for this picture, she wanted to determine how much jewelry should be visible. Then we needed to ensure that the

CHEMENA'S WOMEN
The evening following her show in Paris, Chemena Kamali and the women of Chloé sit for a portrait before dinner at Le Grand Café: Liya Kebede, Pat Cleveland, Dree Hemingway, Jessica Miller, Gia Coppola, Aimee Lou Wood, Julia Stegner, Tish Weinstock, and Alexa Chung.

Ethiopian supermodel and activist Liya Kebede and the British socialite Tish Weinstock did not pose too close together, as they were both in white lace. Kamali is so precise and so insistent that when Claudia Schiffer could not fly into Paris for the shoot, which also features model Pat Cleveland, actor Dree Hemingway, models Jessica Miller and Julia Stegner, filmmaker Gia Coppola, and perennial It girl Alexa Chung, Kamali moved heaven and earth—and arguably made one too many phone calls—to materialize the second portrait in this story. Despite her hippie airs, Kamali gets what she wants. Kamali sees Schiffer as the embodiment of continuity at Chloé: a fellow German whose modeling bona fides include serving not just as Kamali's muse, but also that of Karl Lagerfeld, another much-mythologized German who before reshaping Chanel transformed Chloé from the 1960s through the '80s, and again in the '90s, alongside its founder, Gaby Aghion. When she arrived in late 2023 at Chloé, a French fashion house built on free-spiritedness and some very good, very frilly dresses, Kamali was thrust into the spotlight from the unknown deputy of Anthony Vaccarello at Saint Laurent. She was tasked with reinvigorating a brand that had become an unsolved equation after a slew of unsuccessful stints from designers including Gabriela Hearst and Natacha Ramsay-Levi. Her appointment was somewhat expected: She started her career at Chloé as an intern for Phoebe Philo in the 2000s, then returned as design director for Clare Waight Keller in the 2010s. "My relationship to Chloé obviously is a very special one," Kamali says. "It's been quite close and very personal throughout my entire career."

Still, being a shoo-in did not guarantee success. Chloé had thrived under Philo and Stella McCartney before that. But it had lost its way. Once a destination for those susceptible to the charms of bohemian style—think Sienna Miller in a flouncy dress and suede boots or Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen in peasant blouses and frilly maxi skirts—it had become too cerebral, an exegesis of French bohémien rather than the thing itself.

Kamali's debut runway show in February 2024 was received as if she had opened the curtains and let the light in. She made just-right silk tops and paired them with golden bijoux. It was a boho-chic fever dream with the kinds of clothes that are a trademark of what Chloé represented but were strangely no longer in its range. And critics raved: *The New York Times* said Chloé had hit the jackpot in Kamali and lauded her revival of the Chloé Girl, one of the most enduring fashion archetypes and a branded cipher for the It girl—think Miller or Jane Birkin, who were both It girls and Chloé girls at their respective peaks. "Finally, a new voice for women," read the headline of a review at *The Cut,* which celebrated Kamali's confidence and said that, as debuts go, hers couldn't have gone better.

"When I arrived, it was all about rerouting the house to its original founding spirit," Kamali says. "Going back to the original DNA to really bring back the idea of the sense of freedom, the free-spirited aura that the brand had, the fact that it feels effortless." But Chloé, she says, is more than a look. "It's almost like a state of mind, Chloé," Kamali says. "A lot of people out there were waiting to see the spirit, the vibe come back, this girl come back. Her radiance, her glow, her vitality."

Kamali's collections are now guided by this sense of ease. "It's not an imposing brand," Kamali says of Chloé. "There's this freedom, and this freedom was always very important to me." She sees the label as a versatile, malleable assortment of principles of dressing that a vast range of women should be able to wear. Clothes made to fit into their lives, not for them to fit their lives into.

This has made Chloé relevant since its inception. While her counterparts—Yves Saint Laurent or Pierre Balmain—were focused in haute couture, Aghion was the pioneer defining prêt-à-porter, those clothes now known as ready-to-wear that were a more realistic antidote to the constraints and pompousness of couture. "She was really someone who wanted to liberate women from that sort of rigidity," Kamali says.

With the exception of Lagerfeld, Chloé has been defined by long tenures of women designers. Its story is an anomaly: Most luxury houses, even those founded by women, like Chanel and Schiaparelli, have historically been designed by men even to this day.

"It should not be breaking news if a woman gets a job," Kamali says, "and it should also not be criticized if a man gets the job, it's also unfair." Two things can be true: The industry needs more women running these sorts of houses; and, in an industry as subjective as fashion, creativity and talent should be the reason someone is hired, not gender.

Women designers are often lauded for their pragmatism—it's one of the fashion industry's trappings and its biggest gender stereotype. "I think what makes us different is I think there's a strong female energy," Kamali says, "a female point of view, which makes it obviously very personal and very intuitive." It's why her collections are still standouts in the landscape of Paris Fashion Week each season. Rather than corsets and stiff tailoring or other concoctions that swaddle and contort the body, Kamali lets it breathe with perfectly adjusted volume and proportion. Her keenness for comfort does not make her clothes less elegant, but rather proposes an alternative, consistent point of view.

"A lot [of fashion] feels very forced, very strategized and merchandised and conceptualized and overly produced and trying to tick as many boxes as possible," Kamali says. "Sometimes if you incorporate too many points of views, the message gets diluted."

"IT SHOULD NOT BE BREAKING NEWS IF A WOMAN GETS A JOB," KAMALI SAYS. "AND IT SHOULD ALSO NOT BE CRITICIZED IF A MAN GETS THE JOB."

HAIR, EMILIE BROMLEY (KAMALI, SCHIFFER), MAÏNA MILITZA (ALL OTHERS); MAKEUP, CLAUDIA SAVAGE (SCHIFFER), SATOKO WATANABE (KAMALI), MAÏNA MILITZA (ALL OTHERS); MANICURES, SYLVIE VACCA (KAMALI, SCHIFFER). PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY PERROTTE PRODUCTION. MILLER, KAMALI, AND SON: GETTY IMAGES. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.









HAUS STYLE
Clockwise from top left: Sienna Miller in Chloé at the Cannes Film Festival in 2024; Kamali and Claudia Schiffer at the Chloé headquarters in Paris; Kamali and her son after her debut show in February 2024.

More than anything, Kamali wants to get at the spirit of Chloé, distilling its essence to its purest iteration. "People are informed. They are smart. The audience today is very much aware and connected," Kamali says. "They want to understand what this brand stands for."

Kamali was appointed at the same time as a handful of other lieutenants were taking the reins at various brands. Sabato De Sarno, formerly at Valentino, took on Gucci; Adrian Appiolaza, formerly at Loewe, took on Moschino; Peter Hawkings, Tom Ford's protégé, took on his label. Two years later, Kamali is the last one standing from this quartet. Her spiritual approach might sound esoteric. But she's clearly cracked the code.

"Chloé is a very emotional brand," Kamali says. "It triggers feeling, it triggers instant emotion."

It's what makes women gravitate to her universe, something that became evident as Cleveland instructed the cohort at the portrait sitting on how to pose: "Dance, move!" she said as Hemingway jumped over a bench and Chung leaned forward to get closer to Weinstock and the lens. These women moved freely and, most importantly, comfortably. "I always say thank God for fashion, the real world is as rough as cement," Cleveland told me in between shots. She then relaxed into her pose and held on to Kebede. They had entered the Chloé state of mind. VF



In the early aughts, everyone who was anyone was at Bungalow 8, the nightclub that transformed Chelsea and defined an era of New York City. DEREK C. BLASBERG talks to the designers, artists, moguls, and aspiring somebodies who packed in the banquettes to light up, get close, and shut it down

THE 8

PHOTOGRAPHER **TODD EBERLE**











BALL

CLUB KIDS
Clockwise from top right: Tracey Emin and John Waters; Grace Jones and Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza; DJ Coleman Feltes. Opposite: "The greatest compliment I ever received was from Ian Schrager, who said it was the [Studio] 54 of our time," says Amy Sacco of Bungalow 8.

"When people speak about Bungalow 8, they're speaking about more than just a venue," coos Iman, the model, entrepreneur, and widow of David Bowie. "They're remembering a feeling. A moment in New York history that Amy helped create and define."

That Amy is Amy Sacco, the nightclub impresario whose velvet-rope instincts defined Manhattan nightlife at the turn of the millennium. Sacco was born to a father who owned a moving company and a homemaker mom. Raised in Chatham, New Jersey, she arrived in New York in 1990. She hustled her way through the city's restaurant and hospitality world before launching the Chelsea hot spot Lot 61 in 1998, then Bungalow 8, which would become her masterpiece, in 2001.

"Amy was the den mother to so many of us knuckleheads who thought that Bungalow 8 was our personal watering hole," George Clooney declares in a missive sent from a summer holiday at his villa on Lake Como.

Bungalow (you knew not to say the number) was on gritty West 27th Street, between even grittier 10th and 11th avenues. This was before the High Line became a top tourist attraction, before blue-chip galleries and billion-dollar towers transformed the neighborhood. Inspired by an art show that was itself inspired by the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel, the club featured palm trees, polka-dot banquettes, murals of the hotel and pool, and a NO VACANCY sign outside that glowed perpetually into the night.

Everyone who was anyone pushed past the "8" handle on the front door. The Hilton sisters sharing a banquette with Sean Penn. Madonna sitting across the room from Wes Anderson. Janet Jackson learning to make a watermelon martini behind the bar. All the nepo babies before we had a term for them. And was that Bill Clinton? (Yep.) Fashion designers, movie stars, major artists, starving artists, socialites, skateboarders, pop stars, backup dancers, moguls, and aspiring somebodies all found themselves squeezed into the same room, united by a common goal: being at the white-hot epicenter of cool.

At its peak, to get in, everyone had to be in the good graces of Disco, the doorman, who was so enmeshed in the world of Bungalow that he met his wife at the club—and wed her there. (Sacco officiated and Lauryn Flynn, a club patron and, at the time, the global director for VIP relations at Calvin Klein, helped outfit him.) The DJs were like family to the patrons—one was literally named DJ Uncle Mike, and another, Coleman Feltes, sometimes found himself babysitting a wild child, Lindsay Lohan, who liked to come in and spin.

The club was live-action social media before social media existed. And just as addictive. Catherine Holstein, the founder and creative director of Khaite, remembers arriving as a young design student years before she became one of American fashion's most influential designers. She says she could go six nights a week. (Before she was Khaite Cate, she was Bungalow 8 Cate.) "You would see a wide range of New York's New York and know what was going on and who's who and what's what," she says.

"Now, going out feels consumption-generating," says Darryl Gibson, today a Miami-based hospitality consultant who was the general manager for Bungalow 8's first five years. "We were generating more than just money; we were generating *culture*."

In its lifetime, Bungalow would be compared to El Morocco, the Stork Club, Studio 54. Sacco joined a short, formidable list of women who didn't simply run rooms but shaped society in them, like Régine, who is credited with introducing the first disco in Paris; Elaine Kaufman of the infamous Elaine's restaurant on New York's Second Avenue; and Nell Campbell of Nell's, which had a sexy dance hall below its 14th Street eatery. The women knew exclusivity wasn't about keeping people out—it was about letting the right people in.

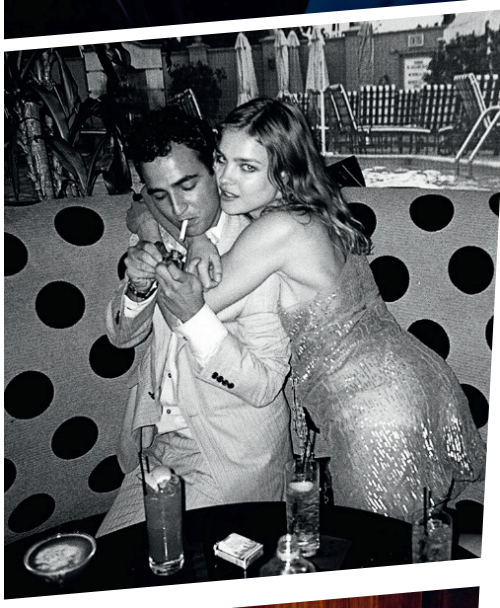
"They say pets take the personality of their owners," the actor Benicio Del Toro says. "I believe clubs take the personality of their owners as well."

By 2009, Sacco had helped transform Chelsea, though her success contributed to the neighborhood's gentrification and, ultimately, to the end of Bungalow.

Twenty-five years after opening night, a new generation is wondering: What was it really like in there? How did people get in? Was it really *that* good? I tracked down some people who were there until the wee hours and asked them why this small club, which had only 10 tables and held a little more than a hundred people, continues to occupy such an outsize place in New York's collective imagination.

AMY SACCO I'm from Chatham, New Jersey, the last of eight children. Amy, my mom said, was short for amen. She was done. I always teased her. I said, "You finally got









LIVES OF THE PARTY
Clockwise from top right: Graydon Carter and John Mellencamp; André Leon Talley and Yvonne Force Villareal; Tom Ford, John Currin, and Tracey Moffatt; Force Villareal; Zac Posen and Natalia Vodianova; Tilda Swinton and friend; Hope Atherton and Tatum O'Neal; Eugenio López Alonso and friend.



HAT TRICK
Annie Leibovitz, who frequented Bungalow 8, photographed Amy Sacco and the author of this story, Derek C. Blasberg (reclining), alongside Keegan Singh, Paris Kain, Alexandra Richards, Brooke Geahan, and Amy Greenspon for *Vogue*, April 2005.



ANNIE LEIBOVITZ.

it right, so of course you were allowed to quit." I started coming to the city in the '80s. I used to work with [chef] David Bouley in my first job in New York at Bouley, the original, and then Vong and Lipstick Cafe.

ERIC RIPERT, CHEF/CO-OWNER, LE BERNARDIN I've known Amy since 1990. She's going to claim she wasn't born yet! We were together at Bouley in Tribeca. I was the sous chef of David, and Amy was working in the offices. It was a big responsibility. Bouley was considered the best restaurant in New York at the time. She was fun, but she knew the responsibility she had, and when it was time to be serious, she could be.

JEAN-GEORGES VONGERICHTEN, CHEF I've known Amy since 1992, when she worked with us at Lipstick Cafe. She has an incredible presence. The moment she walks into a room, you know she's in charge.

SACCO Yvonne Force [Villareal] and I met while hostessing at Bouley. She used to be a painter, and she lived in the Bowery with a couple of other artists in this gigantic loft. I come in, a Jersey girl; this one is in Romeo Gigli and I'm in Ann Taylor. One day she's like, "I've always wanted to make money. Can you teach me how to make money?" I was good at saving. I worked overtime, I worked seven days a week, and I was thrilled to do it. I said sure. I go, "Can you teach me how to be cool? Can you help dress me and tell me about New York?"

RIPERT She had many qualities, even then. *Especially* then. She never showed pressure. Nightlife is tough. To be a woman in that environment and deal with everyone, dealing with staff—it must have been extremely stressful. But when the doors opened and people were coming, she looked like she had no stress at all.

SACCO [Force Villareal and I] used to go out once every couple of months to a hotel bar like The Royalton, The Ritz-Carlton, or the Four Seasons, buy a bottle of Champagne, and hope to meet our rich husbands. We didn't know that basically those bars were full of hookers. We would toast each other and say, "Whoever made it first helps the other." And clink our glasses.

YVONNE FORCE VILLAREAL, ART CONSULTANT One of my clients was Laurance Rockefeller. I had a whole slew of clients, including a lot of financial people. They invited me to the Waldorf-Astoria and said, "Bring a friend." I called Amy and said, "Come to the Waldorf. I want to introduce you to some people who may get behind your restaurant." Probably about four or five of those individuals were early investors in Lot 61, and then continued to Bungalow 8.

Lot 61, Sacco's first nightclub, opened in 1998. After a space in Midtown fell through at the last minute, Force Villareal encouraged her to look in Chelsea. The neighborhood was a cultural wasteland at the time, but a crop of new gallery openings hinted at potential. The risk paid off.

FORCE VILLAREAL She's like, "Where should I do it?" I said Chelsea is the place. I said everybody always follows the art world.
SACCO It used to be a garage. I had to do remediation and build it out from scratch.
NADINE JOHNSON, PUBLICIST No one had anything in that area. It was not pretty. There were one or two bars. It was rough and tough. And not even safe, but no one cared because everyone got so trashed they forgot.

"IT WAS THE ERA OF A MOTOROLA FLIP PHONE," SAYS SARA MOONVES, "SO THERE WASN'T A FEAR OF ANYTHING BEING RECORDED."

At a picnic in the Hamptons, Sacco was introduced to the interior designer Diana Viñoly, who asked about her new club concept. Sacco went to her car to get the plans. Coincidentally, Diana was there with her husband, the award-winning architect Rafael Viñoly.

SACCO [Diana] says, "This will not do." She's like, "Rafael, get over here. You must do this." I go, "I don't have any money." She's like, "Rafael will do it for you."
FORCE VILLAREAL We worked on trade. We gave all the artists just trade. Damien Hirst did the largest spot painting he ever painted, which he made in Rafael Viñoly's basement of his Tribeca studio. Rudolf Stingel did wall-to-wall carpet painting. Sean Landers did a large text painting. Jorge Pardo did these beautiful blown-glass pieces, and the private back room had a David Salle.
DARRYL GIBSON, HOSPITALITY CONSULTANT Lot felt like an art gallery that turned into a party every night.
SACCO The first night I opened, we were voted the number one bar in New York on the cover of *Time Out.* We hadn't even sold anything to the public! What I didn't know and I wasn't prepared for was a line of people down the entire block wanting to come in and eat and drink.
PLUM SYKES, AUTHOR I do remember me and [my sister] Lucy and Amy were like, "Okay, let's have Plum and Lucy's 30th at Lot." We just called it Lot. I remember being so excited when someone told me, "Kate Moss and John Galliano are here"—and we hadn't invited them. I thought, That's so cool that they just had to show up. I was like, We've made it!
SACCO Armani had a runway show at Cipriani on Wall Street. He had the after-party at Lot, and Robert Isabell did the decor. He was a monster. He ended up calling me a cunt. I was like, "This cunt is still the boss, so, sorry." God rest his soul.
XUAN LY, BRAND MANAGER The most amazing night was when Mr. Armani booked a private event at Lot 61. [I was a server there] and I got to meet him, Mira Sorvino, and Sophia Loren, and I thought I was levitating.
SACCO For years after that, when anyone asked Armani what his favorite restaurant in New York was, he said Lot 61 because my chef made the pastas he had asked for, and he actually came to the tastings himself. We had De Niro, Scorsese, Kevin Costner, everybody.
MARK RONSON, DJ I would DJ so many nights at Lot 61. Many of my memories are a little blurry, but I can recall showing up so hungover—I partied a lot in the era—and saying to myself, How am I going to get through this gig? And then you'd see her coming toward the booth, all six foot one of her, and it was impossible not to be happy.

After three years at Lot 61, Sacco was ready to expand her empire. She opened Bungalow 8 in 2001 in a nearby former gallery space in Chelsea, hoping to create a more intimate kind of club.

SACCO Lot was on fire, but I wanted to expand. I lived across the street [on 27th Street], and I kept walking up and down. There was a gallery space, and it looked abandoned. I kept putting notes under the door. "If you're ever interested in leasing it, call me." And one day I got a call.
FORCE VILLAREAL Basically, it became an extension of her living room.
SACCO The premise of Bungalow 8 came about because I was walking around Chelsea and saw the gallery that had Jeremy Blake's show, "Bungalow 8." It was all about the Beverly Hills Hotel, like a schematic redigitizing and reconfiguring of the bungalows.
FORCE VILLAREAL We were gallery hopping, and it was at Feigen gallery, and she was really inspired. She met Jeremy, who was such a cool, intelligent, gorgeous guy.

Blake took his own life in July 2007, a week after the suicide of his girlfriend, Theresa Duncan. His looping video installation, Chemical Sundown, *was a fixture on the second floor of Bungalow 8 from the day it opened till the day it closed.*

SACCO I'd never been to Los Angeles at the time, but I'd been watching Old Hollywood films with my mom since I was a little girl. I was fascinated by the Beverly Hills Hotel. In New York, we're all cliffhangers. We're living stacked on top of each other. I said, "Wow, what would it look like if you could have that bungalow experience in a city like New York?"
GIBSON Bungalow was like being outside at the pool at the Beverly Hills Hotel at night. On a night with a full moon, the space glowed; it was magic. There were the palm trees, which lived inside for so long. I live in Miami now, and it amazes me that we were able to keep those trees alive, with people smoking, sitting on them, dropping drinks.
SACCO I put the skylight in to remind everyone it was time to go home when the sun came out. But people would just bring a pair of sunglasses. I ended up being the unofficial Sunglass Hut because I had a basket of what everyone forgot in the closet for those people who were there when the sun came up, finishing their bottles and their stories.
LY It had a [glass] rooftop, like a bungalow. There was an upstairs for the DJ booth, and you could look down at the room and see everyone.
DISCO, DOOR GUY The first time we drive down West 27th, there's CONTINUED ON PAGE 124

FERGIE/BECKHAMS, CLOONEY, CLOONEY/ANDRÉ 3000, VON TEESE/JOHANSSON/LOUBOUTIN: RICHARD YOUNG/SHUTTERSTOCK. HILTON: PATRICK MCMULLAN/GETTY IMAGES. ROOM ATMOSPHERE: BILLY FARRELL/PATRICK MCMULLAN/GETTY IMAGES. SACCO: A. PERRY HELLER/CONTOUR/GETTY IMAGES.















BY CANDLELIGHT
Clockwise from top left: Fergie with David and Victoria Beckham; Sacco; Paris Hilton and Jason Shaw; André 3000 and George Clooney; Clooney's 47th birthday party at Bungalow 8 after the Met Gala; Dita Von Teese, Scarlett Johansson, and Christian Louboutin.

Newsom Affair


How I Blew Up—
Then Rebuilt—My Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37 private. In the first, I resign—knowing that if I am to stay sober, I cannot return to City Hall. In the second, I end the affair.

What I didn't know until later was that my sister had also reached out to my boss. She called his cell and told him not to see me again. "She is unwell. She is getting help. Even if she reaches out to you, it is your responsibility to say no." His response, she told me, was some version of "God bless, God bless...."

My family placed much of the blame on my boss and the conditions of the office. But it wasn't the affair that derailed me. It was my alcoholism. The affair just gave it somewhere to live.

When I return home from rehab nearly two months later, I try to resume life as a wife and mother. Meanwhile, Alex leaves each morning for City Hall—for the man I have betrayed him with, still unaware of what had happened between us.

Soon he is recruited to manage the mayor's reelection campaign. His hours stretch into strategy sessions and dinners that run past midnight. Brick by brick, he is building something.

For months, I say nothing. The silence settles into my body like a fever. Until one night I am no longer able to carry it.

CONFESSION—JANUARY 13, 2007

Alex is home in San Francisco with our son, handling bath and bedtime. I am at my parents' house in Napa. I sit downstairs on the living room couch in the dark, lit only by the glow of my phone.

I begin drafting an email, my thumbs moving quickly. I keep it plain: *just sex—on and off for months—with the mayor. It ended before rehab. I'm sorry.* I blame my alcoholism. I stare at the screen for a moment, then press send and turn off my phone.

In the morning, I drive straight back home. When I walk through the door, the house looks the same. Toys on the floor. A bottle in the sink. But Alex is not the same. He is standing in the kitchen. His face is drained of color. He looks at me in a way I do not recognize.

His voice is careful, measured—one of the qualities I have always loved about him. Even in catastrophe, he remains unflappable. He says he needs a few weeks to think. Then he packs a bag and leaves.

I still wonder which was the greater offense: my infidelity or my failure to look him in the eye when I told him about it.

During that time, he requests a meeting with the mayor, who is still in Davos at the World Economic Forum. Word has already reached him in Switzerland that I might have confessed. All day, his number flashes across my phone.

The meeting is set for the day after his return from Europe. Alex makes the drive to City Hall, a drive he's made thousands of times. For years, he answered late-night calls from his boss, sacrificed weekends without hesitation. He wants to hear it directly—to look him in the eye one last time. There is no straight answer.

ABOVE THE FOLD—FEBRUARY 1, 2007

By morning, my face is above the fold in every local newspaper. *SFGate:* "Campaign manager resigns—confronts mayor, who is 'in shock.' " *The New York Times:* "San Francisco Mayor Admits He Had Affair with Aide's Wife." Television stations run the story on a loop. The mayor holds a press conference live on TV. "Everything you've heard and read is true," he says.

I watch from my parents' house in Napa. I sit on the pale green chenille couch, ashen and silent. My family moves around me, talking strategy. My father offers to get Cold Stone Creamery since I haven't eaten in two days. My mother scrolls through the readers' comments about me online. My brothers alternate between inappropriate jokes and threats of revenge.

My phone floods with calls and texts from reporters. I don't answer. I don't respond. I say nothing. I wait out the weeks until I can see Alex again. The headlines, the commentary—none of it matters. I think only about him.

BAD NEWS

It is a Sunday morning. I am having coffee with a friend at an outdoor café in Noe Valley. On the abandoned table next to us lies the *San Francisco Chronicle,* featuring a profile of the mayor's new girlfriend. My friend picks it up and begins reading aloud.

"I shouldn't say this, but...if people did research into the scandal...the woman is the culprit."

I have seen commentary about myself before—speculation, condemnation, the occasional defense. That is not new. What is new is his girlfriend entering the record—someone who came into his life after the affair.

The next morning, the same friend texts me a link to *SFist.* I click. I scroll. My heart begins to race, then everything slows. My mouth goes dry. She has more to say.

"I'm a total woman's woman, girls girl.... What's your definition of affair?... It was a few nothing incidents when she showed up passed out outside of his door.... She is bad news."

I read the sentences twice. They do not change. *Bad news. A few nothing incidents.* A thin, hollow feeling opens in my chest.

A columnist from the *San Francisco Examiner* calls. I know him socially. He asks if I want to speak publicly. I thank him but decline. He says her framing makes it sound nonconsensual. It wasn't, I tell him. *I was not coerced. I knew what I was doing.*

#MeToo is still more than a decade away, but the arguments are already forming. I hear every explanation. None absolves me. Yes, the drinking mattered. So did my arrogance—the belief that consequences were for other people.

I was not confused or naive. I was a grown woman who made choices that hurt someone I loved.

I *am* the culprit.

A REAL GIRL'S GIRL

Soon after, Kamala Harris calls. I know her from the Brown administration; she is now the district attorney. I tell her people are urging me to speak publicly. A publisher has offered an advance for a memoir. I am broke and unemployable.

She listens, then says simply: "I wouldn't say anything right now, Ruby. Just pause. More time will give you better perspective."

It turns out to be the best advice I receive. I am newly sober and still inside the wreckage—unable to make sense of anything, let alone speak clearly about it.

So I stay silent.

ALEX

I believe there is a possibility he will take me back; that somehow honesty will stabi-

lize things. He will be furious, wounded, but we will absorb this and move forward. I am wrong.

Since my confession, Alex and I never sleep under the same roof again. Living with my drinking required constant effort from Alex: emergencies, quiet cover-ups, extra parenting. My confession changed the equation. Whatever hope he still carried about who I might become had to give way to who I had been.

Reading his emails to me from that time is the hardest part to revisit. Not because of what he says, but because I can see the result of my actions landing on the person I loved most. The distance between what I felt for him and what I did to him is difficult to hold.

In those messages, he is never cruel or vindictive. He is trying to understand how his life could be upended by the person he trusted most.

He tells me he can't sleep, that he lies awake trying to make sense of it. The damage, he says, isn't contained to our marriage. It moves outward into everything: his work, his future, his financial situation, his sense of himself—the life he thought he was building.

In those first months, I cycle through apologies, long emotional explanations, attempts to reach him. Later, in recovery, I learn a different way to respond. Not with words but with restraint.

To leave him alone. To make his life easier where I can and not add to what I have already broken—even if that means never being let back into his life again.

The greatest cost was never public. It was what I did to a good man who deserved better than I gave him.

BOTH THINGS ARE TRUE

Eleven years later, #MeToo arrived with a new version of my story—one in which I was not the culprit but a powerless subordinate. I pushed back. Claiming responsibility felt like the last form of agency I had.

Still, the reckoning exposed what I had missed: Power does not need to coerce. It only needs to exist. The responsibility to hold the line belongs to the one who holds it. That didn't happen. But I didn't stumble into the space left open—I saw a possibility and went for it.

Both things are true: I am responsible for what I did. Power does not distribute consequences evenly.

PROTECTION—JANUARY 29, 2026

I wake to a voicemail from someone I know from my City Hall days, now an adviser to my former boss. "Hey Ruby! Blast from the past. Give me a call."

Later, on my way to yoga, I pull over and call him back. After a few minutes of small talk, he gets to the point. "The governor's memoir is coming out in a few weeks," he says. "He wanted you to know—you appear in a few pages."

I pause.

"Would you like me to read them to you? There's nothing bad at all—nothing to worry about."

"No thanks," I say. Then I add, "Does he tell the truth?"

With a small, uncomfortable laugh, he says, "Well, we all remember things differently, don't we, Ruby?"

For my former boss, it is a footnote in a longer arc of ascent. For me, it is the fracture that split my life into before and after.

When I read the pages a few days later, a familiar feeling returns, the one of being written about by someone who assumes I won't answer. He describes it as "the briefest of affairs." His sister, he notes, observed that I was "hanging a bit too close."

He also writes that he was the one who "came clean" to Alex. That detail—subtle but significant—is the one that stays with me. It reads—to me, at least—as a version of events that gives him credit for something I had already done. Technically defensible, perhaps, but one that leaves the unmistakable impression that he, not I, was the one who told Alex the truth.

But resentment is a luxury I can't afford. Instead, I return to gratitude, not for the affair, not for the pain I caused Alex, but for the totality of what followed. I required something catastrophic to change direction. Something that made the cost of going back—of drinking again—unthinkable.

The pain of what I did to Alex, and to myself, has stayed with me every day for two decades. I used to think that was punishment. Now I understand it as protection.

Resentment is a luxury I can't afford. Instead, I return to gratitude, not for the affair, not for the pain I caused Alex, but for the totality of what followed.

WHAT REMAINS

Today I am 20 years sober.

I traded City Hall galas for church basements. Stilettos for New Balances. I met Ryan and built a second marriage—one that has lasted longer than the first. His steadiness has changed my life. Together we've built the kind of family I wasn't sure I'd ever have. We are raising our 11-year-old son together.

It took more than a decade for Alex to look me in the eye again. We co-parented without hostility, but he kept his distance. I focused on what I could: staying sober, showing up for our son, living differently.

Eventually, small openings appeared—iced teas at The Depot with our son, groceries dropped off during COVID, dinner for our son's birthday. When he got engaged to Heidi, a close friend of mine, the gatherings became more frequent.

Then last year, I was driving home one afternoon when he called. We slipped easily into conversation, laughing about something small involving our son. Then his tone shifted.

"I actually called for another reason," he said. "Heidi and I want you and Ryan to come to our wedding in November." The words hung there between us. After a moment, he filled the silence. "Ruby. We are family."

And so we went.

My husband and I sat among the guests as people stood to toast the couple—Alex laughing, raising his glass. Then our son stood up, grown and composed, and gave the best man's speech. Ryan's arm tightened around me; I leaned into him. Alex caught my eye and smiled.

We lost the marriage. We didn't lose the ability to become another version of a family. The damage was mine. But so is the life rebuilt in its wake. VF

MAGA Style


Radical Chic

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28 Chiara Boni sheaths, Tuckernuck dresses, and Florsheim shoes—and turned them into curdled messages about gender, sexuality, and power. MAGA understands fashion. Not in the esoteric way that speaks to intellectuals and insiders. Not as an act of fabulousness. Or even as a matter of individual identity. No need to get bogged down in questions about provenance, artfulness, long-form storytelling, or even metaphors. MAGA keeps things simple in a complicated and confusing world. Girls wear pink. Boys wear blue. Everything else is noise.

This administration understands that the electorate to whom they're appealing is not reading the fine print. We live in a visual culture where we make instant decisions about people in a single glance, whether it's Trayvon Martin, the Black kid in a hoodie carrying a bag of Skittles who was killed because he looked suspicious, or Kyle Rittenhouse, the white kid wearing a backward baseball cap and toting a semiautomatic weapon who killed two unarmed people but was found not guilty by a jury. People see what they expect to see, what they need to see, in order to make sense of their world.

Hegseth obsesses over the physique of service members—or "warriors," as he prefers to call them—suggesting that a soldier's bravery and integrity are directly related to the size of his waist and the country's dignity is measured by six-packs. He has transformed these men—and a dwindling number of women—into models for what he calls the Department of War. Their job is to strut and flex on the world stage. For Hegseth, nine tenths of victory is looking the part.

With his slicked-back hair and suit jackets cut so that his biceps bulge through the sleeves, Hegseth moves through his days like a comic book superhero, seemingly on the verge of popping his buttons at the first sign of threat or the first test of his authority. His rage stands as a measure of machismo, as if civility is for wimps. What does competence look like through his lens? It's not a brown-skinned woman hunched over a computer keyboard. It's a square-jawed warrior with a V-shaped physique looking like Captain America.

What does a woman who is deserving of the country's sympathy and respect look like? She does not look like Becca Good, whose partner, Renee Good, was shot and killed by ICE agents in Minneapolis. Federal officials initiated an investigation of Becca Good.

For this set, a woman deserving of empathy looks like Erika Kirk. I was struck by the sight of Kirk, in the aftermath of her husband Charlie's killing, leading a conversation with Nicki Minaj at the Turning Point USA conference. The rapper looked as though she were headed to church, whereas Kirk could have been headed to the front row of a fashion show. The former beauty queen with her blond Rapunzel locks was onstage wearing a bronze satin blouse and flowing white trousers. Pious femininity was being acted out with costumes, makeup, and abundant use of *amen.*

The women exalted in these spaces put their face on in the morning—as a woman from the 1950s might say. They slide into heels. They perform (white) femaleness for an audience that wants to be reassured that the social hierarchy as they've long defined it hasn't been upset.

MAGA style is a tool for sorting us into categories. Those who deserve empathy versus those who should be investigated. Those who are heroic versus those who are expendable.

The Trump world has grabbed onto a part of the culture that was once the purview of women, queer folks, Black and brown people, artsy intellectuals, and creative iconoclasts. Fashion was a safe haven with its own special language—a place that had thankfully moved beyond bling, so-called nude heels that came in a single shade of beige, and the flimflammery of power dressing. It had become wondrously varied so that it was almost by default an expression of individuality.

MAGA has helped itself to the power of fashion and used it to realize a distorted version of a world from two generations ago, before progress was made not just on the runways but throughout American culture. Instead of using fashion to make folks feel more beautiful, more seen, or more empowered, MAGA is making us all meaner. Less enlightened. And a whole lot uglier. VF

Jordan Roth


The Queen of Jordan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43 "there was this over-the-top toast about the great artist Jordan Roth. I was like, Wait, Jordan is an artist now?"

At a recent party on Fifth Avenue, someone who only really knows Roth through his online presence remarks to me that he should pair up with Ryan Murphy. Fortuitously, two days later, Roth announced the premiere date of *The Shards.* In it, Roth will reveal yet another public transformation, playing Steven Reinhardt, a Hollywood fixer in Murphy's adaptation of the Bret Easton Ellis novel about teenagers in 1981 Los Angeles during a serial killer spree. Roth's character is a leering but strangely centered presence in leather outfits and a two-tone wig that the adolescent stars seem not to know if they should fear or feel reassured by.

Sarah Paulson, a mainstay in the court of Murphy whom Roth had known for years through Broadway, was the catalyst for his casting. "I asked, 'Would you ever want to do acting?' and he said, 'Oh, yes.' And I said, 'What about something in the Ryan world?' " Roth was indeed already on Murphy's radar. "Ryan presented [Steven] to me as more cutting edge and kind of an aesthetic force," Roth says, seeing some of himself in the character.

"I was instantly taken by him," Murphy says of Roth. "The interesting thing is he changes like the wind. It's incredibly brave, sometimes shockingly emotional, what he does. He's his own work of art." Murphy is already at work writing the second season of the series.

"My plan was always to be an actor," Roth tells me, adding he desires to continue for the long-term. "I'm never leaving. From the first take I felt, Uh oh. Here we go." (Currently, Roth is exploring acting in a feature film about the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and his older patron-of-the-arts boyfriend Sam Wagstaff. *The Shards* costar Homer Gere will play Mapplethorpe; Roth will play Wagstaff.)

Does Roth's ambition include a full-circle return to Broadway as an actor? Of course it

does. He wants to do "a deconstruction of an existing famous musical," and he's already talking to old colleagues about it. "I would love to see him do *Steel Magnolias,*" says Kaia Gerber, another *The Shards* costar.

The Shards will be yet another chance to collapse the line between real life and life onscreen, not to mention an opportunity to ruffle some feathers of the rigid cultural establishment in the process. But what happens if he ever drops the act?

At the core of all these publicly performative artistic endeavors is a common theme: ambiguity—of cultural genres, professional occupations, and he is most ambiguous when it comes to gender. It is the rare subject that Roth is willing to address directly.

"What I don't love, and what I do pick up on in my body and heart, is discomfort. Those moments where it feels like where I am causing you confusion by my existence causes me discomfort." Referring to the looks and double takes he gets when using a public restroom, he says, "If you have to ask, it means I have failed at making [myself] legible, and we have been led to believe that making ourselves legible to one another is our responsibility. I am coming to release that responsibility." Roth's progressive ethos of genderfluidity is a useful way to think about how many people feel about him: They just don't know what to make of him, and they cannot look away. The gap between his sarcastic self and his performance of himself can be, for some, confounding.

What seems to gall most people I spoke to is his bombastic, overly serious, and entitled self-creation. He pins those negative reactions on his sexuality, his fluid gender, and their ignorance.

There is a symmetry between the way he approaches all of this—his gender, his art, and his life online—which is that there's really no separation, and no way of perceiving, this man without his mask.

Roth already has everything money can buy, so the only real adventure left is in his constant transformation. Success for him is not whether he will be accepted as a true artist or actor. His sincerity, the fearlessness of trying—very hard and very publicly—is success in itself. He has spent his life delighting in proving his doubters wrong. And who is to say Tonys are the only awards he'll ever get? What matters is that we've tuned in to the Jordan show. He thinks we should have been watching all along. VF

Lauren Sherman


Sherman's March

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33 Wintour did not read this article before publication.]

Her aggressive coverage may have attracted subscribers, but it's been complicated for the advertising side of the business. When *Puck* acquired *Air Mail,* the media company founded by former *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter, the latter's luxury advertisers revolted. According to a source familiar with the merger, *Air Mail* received "a flood of concerned emails" from advertisers, including LVMH, threatening to pull their business. "All the luxury advertisers had huge concerns with appearing, specifically in Lauren's newsletter," the source says. "She is great and deeply talented and very well sourced—obviously—but she's considered a brand safety risk for a lot of those luxury companies." The source points out that the *Line Sheet* dinners that Sherman hosts have struggled to attract luxury advertisers. Puck did not provide a list to *Vanity Fair,* but sponsors have included Starbucks, Saks Fifth Avenue, and American Express; Burberry and Rolex have advertised in *Line Sheet.*

The relentless pace of *Line Sheet* is forgiving for its author. When Sherman is wrong, well, on to the next column. Errors and whiffs are briskly airbrushed away by the unending march of content. "Lauren is never wrong in Lauren's eyes," says one fashion journalist. "You can tell that from how she writes her, quote, unquote, 'corrections.'" For the *Line Sheet* reader, the sausage-making is part of the experience, no matter how messy it gets. In the middle of one particularly egregious correction, Sherman promoted *Line Sheet*'s premium $250-per-year "inner circle" subscription, noting that the offending newsletter was "available to top-tier subscribers only, mind you."

"I don't think she does enough reparation when she is wrong," says one fashion editor. "She gloats on the scoops, and she wants all the glory of reporting things first. But a lot of people wish they would suffer a little bit more when she gets it wrong." Another editor who has been the subject of speculative coverage in *Line Sheet* says that's shaped their view of Sherman's work: "Because I've seen so many lazy inaccuracies, I now don't trust the harder-hitting stuff." That Sherman can be speculative and freely declares whom she believes will be right for what jobs has consequences beyond bruised egos. "It can hurt your career," says a fashion journalist. "Because if someone like Lauren is happily publishing that you're not right for a job, it might actually impact your ability to get that job."

> "She makes people nervous," says Parisian PR chief Lucien Pagès. "Those who compete for scoops and also those who have something to hide. She can make me nervous!"

Sherman insists that she isn't so cutthroat. Or, at least, wasn't always. One day in March of last year, she addressed the speculation swirling around the industry that Demna, the artistic director of Balenciaga, would decamp to be the new head of Gucci. She dismissed the notion as "silly." Sherman reminded readers of that reaction three days later in a column on the news that Demna would be the new head of Gucci. Sherman tells me now she found out in those intervening days about the appointment and could have reported the scoop. "The way I found out was very embarrassing for an executive," she says. "They might have gotten fired if I had run it." Because of sympathy for the executive and a (currently healthy) professional relationship with Kering, the parent company of Gucci, she decided not to publish.

She pauses to think. "If I could go back," she says, "I would have run it." VF

Bungalow 8



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 118 nothing down there. It was a dark street. I was like, "Yo, where?"—excuse my language—"Where the fuck am I?" Then you saw the NO VACANCY sign and that big light.

FORCE VILLAREAL It was a pretty small space, with polka-dot booths and striped booths, and it was just such a heightened sensibility in there. No matter how tired you might be when you walk in, you are wide awake and ready to connect with people.

BENICIO DEL TORO, ACTOR And don't forget the people-watching—it was the best show in town.

SACCO I felt like people really wanted a more intimate space at that time. Don't forget, back then everything was big. Lotus was big. Pink Elephant was big. Cain was big. And you had Marquee. Limelight! And I said, "Well, let's give someone a little more privacy to be themselves, to be able to let their hair down."

It was a little slow in the beginning because I had made the mistake of giving out [key] cards. The key was basically an invitation. It was a real room key. And if you showed it at the door, we had the list, and they were numbered so we could identify the member. It was like the first New York members club.

SYKES It was members-only without a membership fee.

COLEMAN FELTES, DJ She was inspired by what was happening in London, but that's such an old culture there. The whole membership thing here hadn't taken off yet. I think what she ended up doing was dropping that and then just having a supertight door, and it changed. She didn't care about making money. She knew the first six months, maybe a year, that she was going to do a slow burn, and she'd build this concept—and she wasn't selling out.

Not long after Bungalow 8 opened, the World Trade Center was attacked. For a time, New York nightlife was a desert. Sacco covered everyone's salaries out of her savings. An infamous Sex and the City *episode in which Sarah Jessica Parker's Carrie Bradshaw goes to the club after finding out a friend has a key contributed to getting people back out.*

GIBSON When we opened, there was a really strict door policy, so some people didn't even try to come. Then the *Sex and the City* episode aired. The weekend after that episode aired, the door was insane. So many people came out of nowhere! That was an exciting night for me—we stuck it out, we thought people weren't coming, and then all of a sudden, people *got it.* It never let up from there. After 1 a.m., like clockwork, the door would go crazy, and we made all of our money in the next three hours.

DEL TORO It always evolved into something otherworldly after midnight.

SACCO *Sex and the City* contributed to a lot of mythology but also contributed to, I think, the beginning of the slow decline, because the masses knew about it.... I love Darren [Star], by the way. I clearly remember that when I went to see the shooting...it was only men. I'm like, That's not representative of what this club is. I got on the phone, and I started calling everyone that was beautiful that I knew to get their asses down for free drinks and be in *Sex and the City.*

SYKES I didn't watch *Sex and the City* because I was too busy living it. We had this narrative at the time that we're all in the movie called *The Last Days of Disco,* and we're living that every night at Bungalow 8. My sister and I and all our English friends would go on a Friday night at whatever time it was, 11 o'clock, and we would stay until five in the morning. I don't know what we were doing. I didn't take any drugs because I don't take drugs, but it was so much fun that every Friday night I'd stay till five in the morning, drinking a couple of kamikazes.

LAUREN TABACH-BANK, ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR, *INTERVIEW* MAGAZINE There was a group of girls who were all assistants, associates at Condé Nast, mostly working in fashion and entertainment. We'd go to dinner at Pastis around eight, the original Pastis on Little West 12th. And then we'd head over to Bungalow 8 and stay till very late. If you were feeling really naughty, you'd go to Florent and end the night with a cheeseburger. Then you would be back at your desk at 8:30 the next day, dressed to the nines and maybe a little hungover—but you'd show up.

SARA MOONVES, EDITOR IN CHIEF, W MAGAZINE I moved to New York in 2003 to go to NYU, and very inappropriately, Bungalow 8 became our clubhouse. I was like, I can't believe this place actually exists. It has so much status symbolism, like where you were sitting, which booth you were in, whether you got in, and all those things. The music and the dancing and the lighting and the crowd, it was like a fever dream.

FELTES [Amy] was into disco, soul, hip-hop, funk, and remixes, mash-ups. She had great taste, but we weren't like the club that played house music and European stuff. It was very, very American, and that was Amy.

TABACH-BANK When people say "dancing on tables," it's kind of a jokey term. But that actually happened.

STING, MUSICIAN I was on tour with The Police [in 2007] when we played Madison Square Garden, and it was Halloween. For the performance, I wore a Harlequin's outfit with a superhero's mask. I had tights, a codpiece, a sort of motley jacket, and a mask. We just went straight to the club from the stage.

TRUDIE STYLER, FILMMAKER/ACTIVIST I sat through that show at the Garden, in my Catwoman outfit, including the mask. I remember dripping with sweat through The Police show and then arriving at Bungalow 8, which was, thank God, very nicely air-conditioned. At some point in the evening, I remember the Catwoman in me overtook, and I jumped up on one of those famous plant pots.

MOONVES I remember sitting in booths, and people were hanging off the palm trees, and it was just insane. It was pre–social media, so you weren't looking over your shoulder to see if someone was recording you or taking pictures of you. It was the era of a Motorola flip phone, so there wasn't a fear of anything being recorded.

RONSON I just remember standing in the middle of the room, and that amazing lighting where it was just dark enough. You could never really get in trouble there because no one could really see what you were doing. You could see enough to put one foot in front of the other, but no one could see what you got up to. Most of the nights I was walking in, like 1:45 or 2 a.m., coming off another gig, and it was electric.

LAURYN FLYNN, STYLIST/DESIGNER It became a private villa, a private sanctuary, if you will. That's why I refer to it as a speakeasy, because she doesn't check your phone at the door, but if you fucking take your camera out, you'd be banned for life.

SACCO [I remember] Lindsay [Lohan] and Cyndi Lauper doing competing handstands against the wall one night. I think Cyndi won. Demi [Moore] was there on one of her first dates with Ashton [Kutcher]. They came to Sunday bingo night. My friend Erickson Wilcox, who was one of

my waiters from Lot 61, came over and called out bingo. If you called out a false bingo, you had to hold onto the palm tree and get the paddle on your fanny. I swear there were plenty of people who did that on purpose.

SYKES You could pop in from Hollywood, if you're an actor, and feel like "I'm really in New York."

CATHERINE HOLSTEIN, FOUNDER/CREATIVE DIRECTOR, KHAITE Also, you could smoke back then, which gave everyone something to do with their hands while they talked, and they didn't need to clutch phones with dear life out of awkwardness. What did Fran Lebowitz say to Mike Bloomberg when he banned smoking in 2003? What do you call artists sitting in bars talking, drinking, smoking? It's called the history of art.

MOONVES I remember getting in and taking off my shoes and doing a cartwheel down the center aisle of Bungalow 8 and politely being asked to leave. That was the only time I was asked to leave, and I was welcomed back.

GIBSON You would have A-list celebrities, heiresses, duchesses and dukes—upper-crust society. And then you'd have people who meant a lot to the streets of New York—street kids from Brooklyn, artists who didn't have a dollar to spend but their currency was something else.

SYKES She got people like Jay McInerney and.... Oh God, what was that woman called? Paul Auster's wife—Siri Hustvedt. Those kinds of people would show up: cool, fashionable, literary types. Because movie stars don't want to hang out with movie stars, do they?

IMAN, MODEL/ENTREPRENEUR Before people knew about curating—you know, that cultural buzzword—Amy understood that magic, that the room comes from the people in it.

SACCO Annie [Leibovitz] was amazing. She used to come for five o'clock cocktails at two o'clock, or whenever they finished a shoot. I would just open up the room for her and call a bartender in early. Duh! She's one of the greatest artists of our time. Her partner Susan Sontag was around. Can you imagine? So you have Susan Sontag, and you have Salman Rushdie, and yet at the same time you had Kylie Minogue, and then you'd have Kid Rock, and then you'd have Shaun White and then you'd have, what's the guy that used to...the Allen guy, that died, the big rich guy. With the yacht? Paul Allen.

MOONVES It was the first place I ever went that had this combination of older and young people all together. I think that she liked that, because why else was she letting us in when she had age-appropriate people who were really cool? It's not like she needed us for any reason other than that we were young and, I guess, glamorous.

DEL TORO Inclusion was also a part of the magic. The old and young, people of all ages and walks of life, mixing together to create the Bungalow 8 fabric. The music and its range—mash-ups like [Terror Squad's] "Lean Back" into "Eminence Front" by the Who.

FELTES It was an incredible balance of really successful artists and nobodies.

SACCO It was never meant to be snobbish or for celebrities only. It was just small, so I had to control the door. I knew that.



THE VELVET ROPE
Disco, the door guy, with George Wayne, the longtime *Vanity Fair* writer.

The whole goal was a little more elevated in conversation.

HOLSTEIN Once you were in it, it was a party, because everyone was deemed interesting and fun and special. Also, I remember—it was Todd the DJ—that started playing grunge rock toward the end of the night: Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Radiohead, and some Tom Petty. The wind-down was good. It always started with Michael Jackson to get people going. And always ended with something that you cut your inner thigh to.

SACCO Everyone knew Uncle Mike [the DJ], and everybody would go up and hang with Uncle Mike to the point where I had to get him a T-shirt that said "Uncle Mike is not a toy," because Paris and Lindsay and all the girls that were DJs back then would love to go play and pick vinyl out with Uncle Mike.

FELTES I had a night where Lindsay Lohan came in, and she came into the booth, and she was absolutely blitzed, and she wanted to DJ. I didn't have too many people coming behind the booth because, in order to get to the booth, you had to go through this back door. Most people didn't know about it, and no one would jump over. But I do remember Lindsay literally coming and saying, "I want on. I want to play." Amy looked at me and just said, "Cut, cut."

IMAN I always say, good taste sometimes is boring. You need a little bit of trash. Most celebrities don't want to be protected, especially if they come and they know that Amy will protect them.

DISCO Celebs are just like us. They just have a better job. They are just like us. They cry like us. They get mad like us. They're happy like us. They do the same thing we do. They're normal people.

SACCO If you came with people I did not like that were disrespectful or not fun or just, like, showing up with 20 guys.... It was okay if you told me and they're all hot, but I needed to know in advance because I would've balanced it by taking fewer guys on the earlier side, knowing I had 20 people coming in from a hot soccer team or the Rangers were coming.

FLYNN I had a bunch of skaters crashing at my house, and they wanted to go to Bungalow. I didn't ask Amy, which was a very frightening thing to do, so I took the chance. We all skateboarded there, and she loved it. I mean, it could have gone either way. She could have chopped my head off and banned me for life. But she said, "Make sure that the skateboards are lined up nicely by the door."

DISCO Well-dressed. You know what the problem is? You get in any club if you approach the front door like you got common damn sense.

SACCO We used to have people in ball gowns and drag queens, and then you'd have a skateboarder, but they were actual Olympic skateboarders, so it didn't matter. Or they were young artists like Dash Snow. So nobody gave a shit if they were there in a T-shirt and jeans because they rocked it.

DISCO Some guy told the whole door, "I will buy you, sell you, buy you back, and sell you again." He didn't get in. One celeb told the door, "Y'all are door people. Your job is to get verbally abused." The shit that came out these people's mouths, you would just sit and look at them like, wow.

SACCO You can have the billionaires with all that, you can have the models, but you needed to have the drag queens, and you needed

TODD EBERLE.

to have the surfer boys and the artists and the authors. I wanted musicians. I didn't want a room full of the same people.

STING Anybody who was in town, either a musician or an actor, would end up at Bungalow 8. So, you'd see everybody who was coming through town. There were an amazing, eclectic group of people.

DISCO Then you have what I would call the TFBs. TFBs are trust fund babies.

TABACH-BANK She didn't want any lookie-loos. She didn't want people asking for autographs. There was no VIP room, there was no private area. It was like kind of no man's land, and really fancy girls would stand there shivering on the streets in February, just desperate to get in. That's the kind of energy that it created.

SACCO I remember a night where everyone's like, "Lady Gaga's here. Lady Gaga's here." And I'm like, "Well, I haven't seen her." And I was sitting next to her for two hours because she was just—what's her real name? Stefani! David LaChapelle and his friend Stefani were there, and I was talking to Stefani. Couldn't have been nicer.

GIBSON Janet Jackson! She was working on a movie, and one of the waitresses was in acting school with her. Janet asked if she could come in and learn how to be a bartender. Fifteen minutes before we opened to the public, she came in, and we taught her how to make a watermelon martini. She was a good student.

SACCO Paris and Nicky [Hilton]. That whole crew back then: Casey [Johnson], Rashida Jones, and Lionel Richie's daughter, Nicole Richie. That was before they started the reality shows. And then because of those kids and Lot and the artists that I worked with, we had the Wenners and the Snows and the Schnabel crew—Lola and Stella, Vito. My God! That crew would be there, and then Dad might be on the other side of the room. You'd have Drena De Niro and Robert De Niro not knowing that the other one was going to be there.

FELTES It was Naomi Campbell, Bono. All of them were there, and some of them would close the night at 6 a.m.

GIBSON Amy was so devoted. She rarely missed a night. She needed to be reminded to take care of herself. There were definitely nights when someone would say, "Stay home tonight, you need to rest."

SACCO I hadn't had a day off in 30 days, and I was exhausted, and my staff's like, "Go ahead, we got this." Then I got a phone call: "Amy, George Clooney's here." I'd just gotten out of the steam shower and the jacuzzi, and I had a green clay face mask on my face. I'm like, "Don't fuck with me. Why would he come here? I don't know him. That's stupid." But I go, "All right, I'm going to get dressed and come over there, and if he's not there, I'm going to fire your ass." I showed up in my sweatpants, and I still had some of the mask on my ear—George said, "Oh, you got a little something on your ear there." Then I see Rande Gerber, and they ask me to sit with them, and they bought a bottle. I'm like, "Let me buy you a drink." They're like, "No, let's buy *you* a drink." It's funny [now] because I was more interested in Rande Gerber—I wanted to pick his brain. I was like, "Oh my God, Rande Gerber, Rande Gerber." George was like, "Okay, *that's* a first."

JOHNSON A guy shows up at Bungalow when Bungalow was on fire. Disco asks Amy to come out to see if she knows him. I ask her: "What did you tell him?" She responds: "I just gave him two quarters because he keeps saying 50 cents." It was the rapper 50 Cent. Not sure if he got in or not.

LY I waited on Prince, and he came in just before closing—high heels, the total look—and he ordered a glass of red wine, and he asked for a straw. He didn't want to get his teeth red. No one ever asked for that, but you're Prince, so okay!

SAM ROCKWELL, ACTOR One night I ended up in Bungalow 8 with Chris Messina, Hamish Linklater, and the great Mikhail Baryshnikov.

SACCO Madonna came a few times, but we wouldn't dare just sit down with Madonna. You had to be introduced, and you had to go through asking 35 people, so it never happened.

IMAN [I invited Grace Jones to come with me to Bungalow.] Grace and Amy met that night, and at 3:30 a.m. I'm saying, "Okay, I've got to go home." And Grace was like, "How dare you leave me?" The next thing, she said, "Go away. Amy's my best friend now." The next day, Amy called me and said, "You won't believe it. We were there till four, and then I had to close the club, and she stayed with me, and then we leave the club, and the police saw Grace—of course, they immediately shouted, 'Hey, Grace!' " They escorted her to her apartment!

Sacco herself was the draw. She retained the power in the room by making everyone who came—including the people who worked there—feel like a tribe.

RONSON She's one of the only people in all of nightclub culture who no one has something bad to say about. That's rare.

GEORGE CLOONEY, ACTOR She's tall and beautiful and smart and could drink us all under the table. Which is saying something in those days.

SYKES She was the sort of Svengali puppet master and always putting people together, always introducing people, which was amazing.

DEL TORO Watch *Casablanca.* Humphrey Bogart at Rick's Café—that's Amy Sacco at Bungalow 8.

FORCE VILLAREAL Amy was also a babysitter. I remember all of these young girls coming in, Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton—it was like Auntie Amy.

TABACH-BANK If there was a creepy guy there, she'd be thrilled to kick them out. She really looked after the women in there.

IMAN I wish my daughter could have experienced Bungalow if it were still around, because it would be a place where I know she would be taken care of and feel safe as a girl.

STING The club was meant to be exclusive, but it felt inclusive. Maybe that was just her personality. We always felt at home there. That's where we would go after a gig.

TABACH-BANK It felt like the most New York version of *Cheers.*

GIBSON There was so much creativity in the room at that time. Not just the people who were coming there—the most important people in music, fashion, art, publishing. You also had wildly creative employees who were dancers and singers and artists themselves.

DEL TORO The energy of the room! It all started with the employees who were—or seemed to be—just as happy to be there as their guests.

SACCO Disco got married there. He met his wife, Natalie, at the door, fell in love, and I did their wedding there.

DISCO We had a guy who used to work with us, Matthew, a designer. Once he heard I was getting married, he said, "Disco, I'm going to do the rest." And it was beautiful. The whole family took care of me—voilà.

FLYNN I did dress him, which was not easy because he's not a slim fella.

TABACH-BANK I had my 30th birthday there, and my father flew in for it. And Amy said in her husky voice, "He's great-looking. I'm going to be your next stepmother." I remember her coming over to my dad and just charming him. She did not become my stepmother, and nothing happened with her and my father, but she just had this charm and this larger-than-life personality.

IMAN My husband would hear the phone ringing when I came home; he'd know that Amy was the one on the phone, saying,

"Are you home?"

SACCO I actually had no personal life; I didn't have time to date. I think the rumors of me with celebrities are very funny because I was friends with quite a few people, but I never dated them. I never dated Benicio Del Toro. He's just one of the greatest people I know. We hung out all the time. Same thing with George [Clooney], same thing with Kevin Costner, same thing with Liam Neeson. We were just all friends. I'd rather have them around forever than have a relationship with anyone that was going to taint the future if it didn't work out.

FLYNN The Met Ball for me was always the most exhausting. I had to walk those stairs a hundred times. But I brought everyone [to Bungalow afterward]. I would change into my Led Zeppelin T-shirt and battered-up biker boots. Kate Bosworth, Lindsay, Eva [Mendes], Liv [Tyler], Mary-Kate and Ashley [Olsen]. And they would all say, "Will you please switch outfits with me? I'm *dying*." I would put their ball gown on, give them my outfit, wear their four-inch heels back to [my apartment on] Horatio Street to change, and come back in my own clothes. The last time I went—my eighth trip back—I brought all my sunglasses back, and yeah, we needed them.

After the Met Gala in 2008, attendees headed down to Bungalow 8 for Clooney's birthday party. For many, this was the best night in the club's history.

DISCO I remember one party—I don't know who it was for, but I walked in, and I don't know how she did it, but she had a baby grand piano inside Bungalow. And I sat there like, "What the fuck?" And if I'm not mistaken, John Mayer and Fergie were singing happy birthday.

SACCO John Mayer sang, that I know. I don't think we had a baby grand piano. Everybody was famous, super famous. I was the one who got the FDNY to come and bring in the cake [with 47 candles] as a joke.

WANDA McDANIEL, FORMER ENTERTAINMENT PR CHIEF, GIORGIO ARMANI Best line of the night was when the reluctant birthday boy George Clooney leaned over to me and wryly asked, "Hey, Wanda. Why is Mick Jagger at my birthday party?"

MOONVES It felt like something that could only happen there. Again, God knows how we got in—a few of the assistants, after working at the Met in our Met outfits, went and crashed the Bungalow 8 after-party.

Sacco's success inspired a number of competitors in the nightlife scene. BED opened on the very same block in 2004, followed by more, including Pink Elephant. Marquee opened on the corner of 10th Avenue and 27th Street. A growing police presence made the area difficult to manage and unpleasant to navigate. It was in this climate of chaos and oversaturation that the onetime hot spot began to cool.

SACCO They found a dead girl in a trash bin who had been partying [around there]. 27th Street started to become a zoo. It was like all these animals out of control, walking on top of cars because the streets were too busy, urinating, garbage, fights, stealing. It was a horrible, horrible time.

DISCO You had, like, 12 clubs, and it's like a three- or four-block radius. They had the metal gates on each side of the street. You couldn't cross.

SACCO Everybody wanted a piece of that area, which brings me to the regret that I was never able to buy from those people, that space, because if I'd bought it, we'd probably still be.... Who knows? Maybe we'd still have it, or I would have developed it differently.

MOONVES It's so funny googling Bungalow 8 now, and you only see it with the lights on, and it's like, that wasn't it. That wasn't it at all.

TABACH-BANK It looked fabulous in the evening, and sometimes by the late, late hours, as it cleared up, you're like, Oh, it's really just a room.

In 2009, Bungalow 8 shuttered for good, ending an epic run.

SACCO Nightclubs used to not be long-term, don't forget. They used to be two years, three years.

DISCO Most nightlife spots in New York, four years tops.

SACCO It was 2010 when the lease came up. I wanted to renovate, and we were renegotiating, and they just came up with the most outrageous rent. I said fuck it, I'm not even coming back. I was relieved, but I was bummed. It was bittersweet as anything.

STING I would imagine that the job that Amy was doing every night, up until the early hours of the morning, would have been absolutely exhausting. And I would imagine at some point she would have to say, "Well, I can't do this anymore."

FELTES The success of Amy's place brought in all these other people who were like, "Well, if she's doing that, then we're going to open our place." But that's like everything. A good thing doesn't last.

JOHNSON Guys were begging her to open in Vegas. She needed to have a business person. She could have been successful forever. She could have taken over the world. Bungalow 8 around the world.

SACCO I laugh now when [a club] puts a sticker over my phone because—here's the point—we never invited jerks that would [take a picture of someone].

DEL TORO You could walk in all by yourself and not feel like a stranger. [There was an] intentional curation of patrons. An ecosystem where people from all ages, races, and walks of life came together. I don't know of a place that creates that "sancocho" in New York anymore.

HOLSTEIN The crazy demand that we don't smoke anymore has ruined the art of the conversation. And this is coming from, essentially, a nonsmoker. I think we need to revolt. And also ban phones. [Which I say] as I sit on my phone. Alone. While my husband enjoys his dinner.

FLYNN I want to say this: It was a graceful exit.

SYKES I saw her in London a couple of years ago, and she's exactly the same. I don't know what she's doing now, though.

SACCO I left it behind, and I never looked back.

IMAN We see each other every couple of weeks for dinner.... She's talking to half of the restaurant, and she doesn't know them. Everybody opens up to her.

FORCE VILLAREAL There's such a great interest now in what life was like before the craze of social media and now AI. I would love to see a 21st-century version of Bungalow 8 emerge from all of this.

JOHNSON Amy can do anything she wants. But the world has changed. The world happens on social media now.

RIPERT One night, I remember she invited her mother to show her [the club]. She was so proud to show her family and her friends what she created. We were so happy for her. She was such a good soul; we wanted her to succeed—but we didn't see *this* coming. We didn't think she'd become a celebrity in New York—not of nightlife, of *New York*.

SACCO I spent the last five and a half years nursing and caring for my mom. She passed in December. I didn't post anything on Instagram because we did a private family thing. We got her to 96 [years old], and I kept her at home, as she wished. And I was so glad to not have to work for the first time in my life. It was a beautiful thing to be able to have that time.

DISCO I was telling my wife the other day, I'm at a venue now, and when I'm about to go to work, I'm not happy. At Bungalow, I was overjoyed. I wanted to get there. VF

Marc Jacobs



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 91 it. Whether it's what my drug of choice was or how many guys I saw in one night in Grindr, I don't really care."

He admits there is a payoff to his candor. "I get a good feeling about being honest."

In 2019, Jacobs married former model Char Defrancesco, who has seemingly brought a sense of stillness—of harmony—to Jacobs's life. The Frank Lloyd Wright house they share together is about an hour from midtown Manhattan. "If you'd asked me 10 years ago whether Marc would ever want to live outside the city, I would have said there was no chance," Defrancesco says. "But now I can't get him to leave. Home in Rye has become a real sanctuary for him. He loves the quiet, he loves being surrounded by nature, and he's somehow become completely devoted to feeding the squirrels and chipmunks. I'm pretty sure we're personally responsible for the recent boom in the chipmunk population in Westchester [County]."

Jacobs been talking to his therapist, he tells me at one point. He's been thinking about his trajectory and his successes, like grunge, and how magical moments can happen when people are connected to culture and, he says, "in sync." Charli xcx put him on the cover of her new album, *Music, Fashion, Film,* alongside musician John Cale and filmmaker Martin Scorsese. She had DM'd him to ask for his participation. "I love her as a person and I love her as an artist," Jacobs says—like himself, Charli is the type of mind that can capture the moment, the sync-up.

Jacobs's relationship to culture is like a mirror; he gives as much as receives. He goes to the theater often and attends film and television premieres, wanders art galleries, and documents his every read at home in Rye on Instagram. In whatever medium, he has a way of engaging the artists of his time.

"Once that moment is over, it doesn't mean [artists] can't put out great work," he says, speaking broadly but seemingly referring to himself now. "It doesn't mean they can't do interesting things. It doesn't mean what they're saying won't be relevant. It's just that there's just that really sweet spot."

Vuitton, for Jacobs, was that. His appointment there was part of a growing trend of European houses hiring American designers—most notably Michael Kors at Celine and Narciso Rodriguez at Loewe, both of whom Jacobs outlasted on the continent.

His eventual exit from Vuitton in 2013 signaled a big bet on his namesake brand, that just maybe it could be even bigger than Louis Vuitton. "He was supposed to be the next Ralph, Calvin, Donna," says Vanessa Friedman, fashion critic and fashion director at *The New York Times.* "He was the great hope of American fashion." But it never truly came to pass.

The luxury industry rewards brilliant designers by handing them the most venerated houses, but those designers wind up in a sort of gilded cage, unable to devote enough creative energy to the very thing that made them stars in the first place—their own brands. Jacobs, like other designers who were employed by LVMH but still operated their own labels—Alexander McQueen and John Galliano, to name two—was caught in the tension of that arrangement.

Another thorn was his diffusion line, Marc by Marc Jacobs. It was a hit and a fan favorite. "When Marc by Marc existed, it had the spirit of what we all came to know as the Marc Jacobs spirit," says Jacobs. But it morphed into something he didn't recognize because department store merchandisers had their way with it, Jacobs says. Marc by Marc was folded into the brand's main line in 2015. "So that kind of was its sad end," he says, "and since then we have continued to do bags and clothes at a price that's more democratic, but we've really struggled with making that thing feel right." (Duffy stepped down from his role at Marc Jacobs that same year. Today, he is no longer involved in the company. Duffy did not reply to a request for comment for this story.)

Goldfarb told me that he is intent on relaunching Marc by Marc Jacobs. "We see that as essential," he says. He's revealing a lot about a deal that likely won't close until after this story is out in the world, and he catches himself. "I think you're learning a little bit more than even my own people know at this point. I'm basically giving you stuff that is not carved in stone."

What Goldfarb wants seems clear enough, but what does Marc Jacobs want? You wouldn't necessarily get an answer from his ever-changing image. He's been a bookish, chubby boy-wonder fashion design student and graduated into a long-haired, edgy New York 20-something twink. He's done nerdy and coy, clad in glasses and, once, a neck brace, the result of a dog-walking incident. He's been buff and tan, a Tom of Finland "muscle queen"—in tight thermal shirts and kilts—who posed in his underwear for *The New Yorker* in 2008 and naked for a men's fragrance campaign in 2010.

After his second stint in rehab, Jacobs started hitting the gym. Someone complimented his calves. "I was like, 'Well, I'm definitely not covering those up because they were an asset,'" he says, laughing. He says he wanted a boyfriend "who looked straight-ish," an idea that makes both Jacobs and his publicist, Michael Ariano, chuckle.

In his 50s he was a certified zaddy, femming it up into the 2020s, trading suits for Rick Owens leather-heeled boots and a short bob.

More recently, Jacobs has donned long, clickety-clackety acrylic nails, a true fashion doyenne, and now favors his growing collection of tweed jackets. He keeps his

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Vanity Fair Style 2026 No. 780. The magazine is published eight times per year with issues in February, March, April/May, June, July/August, September, October/November, December/January by The Condé Nast Publications Ltd., The Adelphi, 1-11 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6HT, United Kingdom (telephone: 020 7499 9080). SUBSCRIPTIONS rates include delivery and digital editions. Full rates are £47.92 for one year in the UK, £79 for the rest of the world. To place your order, call +44 (0)1858 438 819. Special offers and exclusive promotions are published in this issue or online at vanityfair.co.uk. To manage your subscription, log onto account.condenast.co.uk. For enquiries, email vanityfair@subscription.co.uk or mail to Vanity Fair, Subscriptions Department, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Market Harborough, LE16 9EF, UK.

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perm in place with silver salon clips, as he is immortalized here by Anna Weyant.

This greatest of American designers is also wearing Chanel on the cover. Jacobs is an unabashed cheerleader of fashion and his fellow designers. He is not above openly loving it, and buying it, and *wearing* it. He used to shop Karl Lagerfeld's jackets, but nowadays he collects Matthieu Blazy's. "I've never had to work this hard for a piece of clothing ever," he tells me of a leopard-print piece he'd been trying for ages to get that was worn by Harry Styles earlier this year. (By the time this story went to press, the jacket had made its way to him, which he documented via an Instagram post.)

Jacobs's knack for transformation may strike some as indecision. But I see it as an earnest act of self-rebranding, which has become his ultimate hallmark. As his collections have submitted to the changing winds, Jacobs will always have himself. Donatella Versace has her bleach-blond hair, Lagerfeld had his ponytail and fingerless gloves, and Jacobs has whatever he's into at any given moment.

"The thing that has remained constant about Marc is his openness," says model Kaia Gerber of Jacobs's eternal curiosity, a personality trait that also defines his collections. Coppola says Jacobs "is still the sweet and sensitive person" she met in the '90s. "He has a world that everyone wants to be part of," says Hilton, a friend, occasional muse, and fellow tabloid survivor. "To me, [he's] become more in touch with himself," says Gigi Hadid, "more at peace, maybe more boundaried."



MARC JACOBS INTERNATIONAL/A24.

KNIT PICK
While at Parsons, Jacobs won an award named for Perry Ellis, whose brand he would go on to lead.

"It's been like seven different companies in 20 years; he changes, everything around him changes," says Ariano, who has worked with Jacobs since 2007. "But then on a personal level, it's like the outside of him changes, but he never changes. He is the same person, but he's either fat with glasses or muscular or has a wig or has nails," he says, laughing, "or whatever."

"It is very pop," Friedman says, "and then it pops, like a little bubble."

Jacobs keeps going. That might be Jacobs's most enduring legacy: his persistence and commitment to fashion as a discipline, and to creativity as a practice.

"[Some people have] an inexplicable passion, [which] drives them even in the worst of times," says Meryll Rogge, who worked for Jacobs for years and is now the creative director of Marni. "And I tend to think that Marc is the purest example of that."

"What all designers have to realize is that if you do good work, you will survive," says Browne. "He is consistent in that he knows and loves fashion, and that's what he designs." Jacobs's collections have often been deemed inconsistent because of how much they vary aesthetically. But more often than not, they have been adored. As Browne says, "Marc has consistently always done good work. That's the reason why people want to see what he does."

He launched Heaven in 2020, which was a hit with Gen Z and remains in operation, albeit with less buzz. After the pandemic, his work shifted yet again. The reach of his runway collections began to wane, becoming available only at Bergdorf Goodman, and now Isetan in Japan, for what Jacobs says is "a select few who really want the thing." Jacobs also started hosting his typically twice-yearly runway shows on his own schedule. Jacobs, ever a zeitgeist whisperer, was perhaps mostly talking to himself.

Both fans and critics say that Jacobs still has it in him to come back as fashion's messiah. The question is whether that's something he wants.

In the last week of June, Jacobs is standing at the New York Public Library, taking a hit from his vape. It's his spring 2027 show, his first statement since the news about the company broke. The timing is entirely his own; everyone else will show their collections in September. He has conjured an audience in his own image: semiretired legends like fashion editor Grace Coddington; perennial downtown characters like Mickey Boardman and Andre Walker; It people from actor Julia Fox to playwright Jeremy O. Harris. Defrancesco sits front row among them.

This show is both a swan song and a foreshadowing. Will he pull off this next era?

Backstage, tensions appear high, but Jacobs is horsing around: He climbs on the back of one of his staffers to entertain his models. One of them has shown up wearing a T-shirt featuring his infamous nude fragrance campaign, so he calls over the *VF* photographer for a snap.

"Marc gets it," says Fox, who entered the Jacobs-verse a few years ago. "I feel like he's really quick to pick up a vibe," she says. "Somehow he always knows what this girl wants."

Back at his showroom a few weeks later, Jacobs appears whole and at peace. Earlier he'd acknowledged that the name on a handbag or bottle of perfume is how many Americans understand him. That's not a problem for him, as long as those handbags are a reflection of his creative spirit.

Should the sale go through, Jacobs will be for the first time since starting his brand just an employee of its new owners. He will continue to be its creative force, and he may still design runway collections. But whatever shape his role takes, there's always been more to Marc Jacobs than Marc Jacobs.

"Marc has never really tried to be anyone other than himself," says Gerber. Perhaps because Jacobs has nothing left to prove. "I'm sure he recognizes the respect that everyone still has for him," Browne says. "I want him to do exactly what he wants to do."

Whether his future is on or off the runway, in SoHo or in Rye, in Chanel tweed or a black hoodie, he will probably stick the landing, because everyone is rooting for him, and because that is what Jacobs has always done across his many lives: land on his feet. VF

FROM "THE UNITED STATES OF STYLE," PAGES 66-81

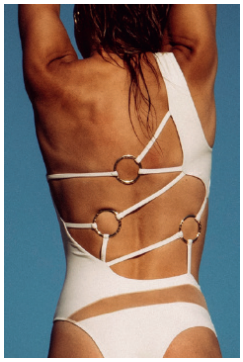
PAGES 68–69: DRESS (WORN AS SKIRT) BY CELINE; BODYSUIT (WORN AS BELT) BY COURRÈGES; VINTAGE TANK TOP BY PATRICK MATAMOROS FOR SAINT LUIS. THIRD FROM LEFT: SANDALS BY JUDE; BRA BY BODE. FOURTH FROM LEFT: SOCKS BY PRADA. FIFTH FROM LEFT: DRESS BY LUDOVIC DE SAINT SERNIN. FIFTH FROM RIGHT: T-SHIRT BY DIESEL; JEANS BY ECKHAUS LATTA. FOURTH FROM RIGHT: PANTS BY KIDSUPER; BRIEFS BY DIESEL. THIRD FROM RIGHT: VEST BY DUNHILL; JEANS BY ECKHAUS LATTA; SNEAKERS BY COACH. SECOND FROM RIGHT: SHOES BY SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO. RIGHT: CAPELET AND RING BY ZIMMERMANN; BUSTLE BY ZOE GUSTAVIA ANNA WHALEN; SHOES BY TOD'S. PAGE 71: TIE BY DRIES VAN NOTEN. PAGES 72–73: SHOES BY CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN. PAGE 75: SHOES BY CASADEI. PAGES 76–77: DRESS AND CORSET BY ETRO. SHIRT BY DRIES VAN NOTEN; JEANS BY CELINE; SHOES BY BIRKENSTOCK. SHOES BY MARNI; VINTAGE T-SHIRT BY PATRICK MATAMOROS FOR SAINT LUIS FROM VINTAGE TOM OF FINLAND. BAG BY VALENTINO. PAGES 80–81: SWEATERS BY AURALEE (RED) AND GUEST IN RESIDENCE. FOURTH FROM LEFT: SNEAKERS BY CONVERSE. CENTER: SHOES BY GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON. FOURTH FROM RIGHT: SHOES BY CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN. THIRD FROM RIGHT: SHOES BY JIMMY CHOO. SECOND FROM RIGHT: SHIRT AND PANTS BY J.PRESS; SHOES BY AEYDE; BELT BY TORY BURCH. RIGHT: BELT BY XÍRENA.

HAIR PRODUCTS BY KENRA PROFESSIONAL (JT), BLU & GREEN (ALL OTHERS); MAKEUP PRODUCTS BY CHANEL; NAIL ENAMEL BY OPI; GROOMING PRODUCTS BY BLEU DE CHANEL; HAIR, TEVIN WASHINGTON (JT), JAMES PECIS (ALL OTHERS); MAKEUP, MARK CARRASQUILLO; MANICURES, DANNY TAVAREZ; TAILORS, JACQUI BENNETT, LUCY FALCK; SET DESIGN, LAÏLA IBRAHIM. PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY DAY INT.

FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS.

The Lookbook

MOOREA



Not made to blend in. Made to be remembered. Moorea redefines luxury swimwear through Italian craftsmanship, couture-inspired design and exceptional French fabrics. Timeless silhouettes for women who wear confidence as effortlessly as the sun. Visit **mooreaswim.com** IG: **@moorea_swimwear_official**

BILLY BAMBOO



Billy Bamboo is a Toronto-based design studio creating contemporary accessories through bold colour, refined craftsmanship and exceptional natural fibres. They create products for life that celebrate playful expression, comfort and timeless quality. Visit **billybamboo.com** IG: **@billy_bamboo**

DANIEL GONZALEZ DESIGNS



Daniel Gonzalez is a luxury womenswear designer and founder of his eponymous label. Known for bold, sculptural silhouettes and emotionally driven design, his work merges couture craftsmanship with modern femininity, offering bespoke and ready-to-wear pieces for women seeking refined, statement-making elegance. Visit **danielgonzalezdesigns.com** IG: **@danielgonzalez.studio**

SILK & BEARS



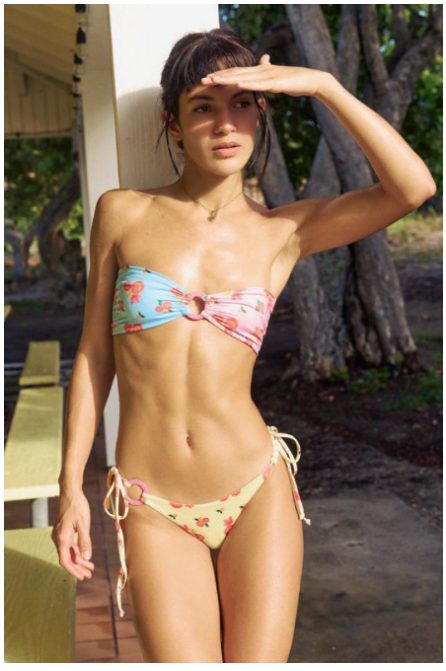
Silk & Bears bridges British design and Vietnamese heritage. Crafted in the historic village of Nha Xa, each piece including hand-dyed silk scarves, silk dresses and intricately hand-embroidered velvet, is created in limited quantities. Every design reflects timeless craftsmanship for the modern, discerning wardrobe. Visit **silkandbears.com** IG: **@silkandbears**

JOYASOL



Joyasol is a California based women's footwear brand where European craftsmanship meets California ease. Handcrafted in Portugal, the brand's timeless silhouettes blend modern luxury and comfort, creating versatile styles for effortless everyday wear. Visit **joyasolshoes.com** IG: **@joyasol**

RUTA DEL SOL



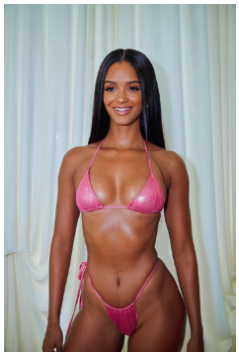
Rooted in Puerto Rico and shaped by Venezuelan heritage, RUTA DEL SOL creates luxury swimwear infused with Caribbean colour and effortless femininity. Reversible silhouettes, conscious materials and refined craftsmanship create swimwear for days in the sun, designed to be felt. Visit **shoprutadelsol.com** IG: **@shoprutadelsol**

ROCCAYA



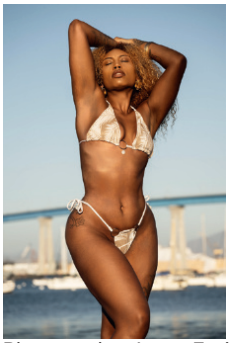
Timeless jewellery begins with restraint: clean lines, balanced proportions and impeccable craftsmanship. ROCCAYA designs pieces that elevate a silhouette effortlessly from morning to evening, season after season. To view their collection online, visit **roccaya.com** IG: **@roccaya**

BEBIKINI



Founded by Bianca Henry, Bebikiniswim draws directly from the vibrant Caribbean island life that shaped her. Their mission is to deliver stylish, inclusive swimwear that amplifies confidence and enhances every sun-soaked moment. Whether lounging by the shore or attending a coastal event, they craft resort wear that makes every moment feel iconic. Visit **bebikiniswim.com** IG and TikTok: **@bebikiniswim**

TOP KNOT SWIM



Founded by Toronto designer Nadia Weekes, Top Knot Swim embraces slow fashion with timeless, expressive swimwear. Created using distinctive materials and designed to be worn multiple ways, each piece invites personal interpretation while reflecting a commitment to quality, artistry, and intentional design. Model: Erica Jazmeen. Photographer: Leroy Ezell. Visit **topknotswim.com** IG: **@topknotswim**

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL



For centuries, India has been the quiet foundation of some of the world's greatest craft traditions, the hand embroidery, the intricate beadwork, the textiles that have dressed royalty and defined elegance long before modern fashion existed. International Appeal brings that legacy forward. Each piece is handcrafted by master Indian artisans, made in limited numbers, and built with the kind of quality that doesn't date. Visit **internationalappeal.com.au** IG: **@international_appeal**

SEYCLAIR



Classic handbag silhouettes take on a different mood at Seyclair, shaped by texture, proportion and material. Supple full-grain leather turns structure soft; tactile hair-on cowhide adds edge. A richer grain, an unexpected contrast, a finish that changes the whole impression - each design speaks the same language, but with a dialect of its own. Visit **seyclair.com**
IG: **@sey.clair**

GINTA



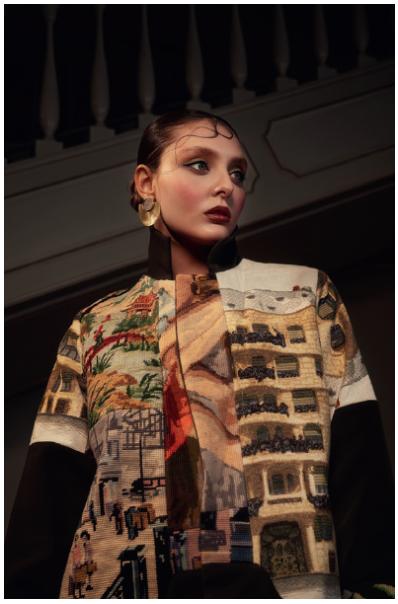
GINTA is a sustainable luxury fashion house specialising in ready-to-wear and made-to-measure women's clothing and accessories. At GINTA, they are dedicated to exceptional craftsmanship, timeless design, and modern elegance. The brand forms the basis of a contemporary, versatile and wearable wardrobe. Visit **ginta.com**
IG: **@ginta_fashion_house**

VIE LORIE



The Veronika by VIE LORIE embodies enduring elegance through Italian craftsmanship, architectural precision, and purposeful design. Created for women whose presence inspires confidence, it is a timeless expression of refinement, quiet strength, and distinction that transcends every passing trend with grace. Photo by: Allie Gross. Visit **vielorie.com**
IG: **@vielorie**

RONDOOZ



Rondooz - they believe art should not remain confined to walls. Every creation begins as an original painting, while selected antique Gobelin textiles are thoughtfully given new life. Some remain one of one forever; others are released in carefully controlled limited editions. Reserved for those who live with art, not simply wear it. Visit **rondooz.com** IG: **@rondoozatelier**



WHITE COFFEE



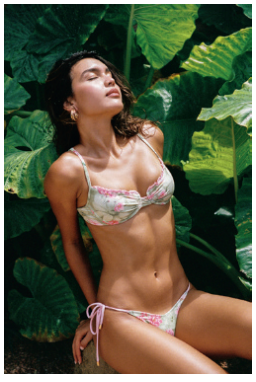
White Coffee masterfully disrupts Scandinavian design by injecting the raw, expressive power of maximalist streetwear. The result is a sophisticated, high-contrast aesthetic tailored for those who dictate culture rather than follow it. Sophistication with a serious edge. Visit **whitecoffee.store**
IG: **@whitecoffee.xyz**

INOLA OJÉN



The Lolita Mule in Sunset by INOLA OJÉN is made for the woman who never waits for approval, building her own. It features premium silk viscose fabric, jewelled strap buckles, and the signature drum heel. Handcrafted in Italy in sizes EU 37 - 45, US 7 - 15. Photography by Riccardo Piazza. Visit **inolaojen.com**
IG: **@inolaojen**

RAYS OF EARTH



Meet Rays of Earth, the London swimwear label making conscious swim feel seriously desirable. Crafted in Portugal using recycled fabrics, the collection combines distinctive prints, considered colourways and flattering silhouettes with reversible styles, bringing versatility and personality to every summer wardrobe. Visit **raysofearth.com** IG: **@raysofearth**

GASPER



Gasper is men's jewellery as quiet self-expression. Designed in-house and made to be worn every day, the pieces say something without ever shouting. No fast trends, no fake claims. Just well-made jewellery a man builds around, layers his own way, and makes his own over time. Visit **gasper.co**
IG: **@gasper.co**

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The Lookbook

STARLIT



STARLIT is a Los Angeles and New York–based label founded by Summer Starlit Prim. Drawing on the decadence and allure of vintage fashion, her designs reimagine old Hollywood glamour through modern silhouettes accented with meticulous tailoring and luxurious details. Sampled and produced in small quantities in Italy, each collection is crafted from silks, chiffons and lace, capturing the timeless elegance of a bygone era. Discover **starlitla.com** and **@starlit** on IG.



NOTHINGS SOMETHING



Nothings Something is a Scandinavian menswear label redefining modern essentials through a polymath lens. Fusing high-fashion aesthetics with sport-luxury silhouettes, Nothings Something creates elevated everyday wear for men who lead, move, and create. Quietly bold. Effortlessly sharp. Always evolving. Visit **nothingssomething.com** IG: **@nothingssomething**

SYDNEY KAY JEWELRY



Sydney Kay Jewelry is where Art Deco meets the celestial and ornamental aesthetic. Sydney believes that her jewellery is more than just adornment, but a means of confidence and inspiration to help you achieve the best version of yourself.

Visit **sydneykayjewelry.com** IG: **@sydneykay.jewelry**

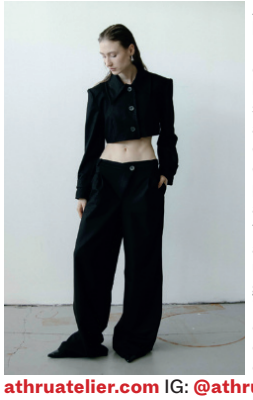
SAGE



Introducing SAGE, an Icelandic brand redefining design in effortless elegance. Founded by Saga Sif, SAGE embodies the spirit of Icelandic creativity, blending stunning aesthetics with comfort. Their garments are crafted to make you feel beautiful, confident and unrestricted, with a focus on flowing silhouettes, timeless designs and comfort as their top priority.

Visit **sagebysagasif.is** IG: **@sagebysagasif**

ATHRU



Athru's garments are handcrafted in Bulgaria and made to order with the highest-quality sustainable materials and fabrics. Offering complimentary customisation, each piece is tailor-made and attuned to the customer. Athru's attire exclusively uses the highest-grade natural fabrics inspiring a sense of luxury and ensuring exceptional quality. Visit **athruatelier.com** IG: **@athru_atelier**

HWIN STUDIO



HWIN Studio is a fast-growing London-based fashion brand founded by Norwegian-Vietnamese sisters Martha and Tammy. With a refined aesthetic inspired by Scandinavian minimalism and its founders' cultural heritage, the brand creates small, considered collections of elevated womenswear in premium natural fabrics, defined by effortless elegance. Visit: **hwinstudio.com** IG: **@hwinstudio**

SALLI



Sālli is transforming the natural fibre activewear category from undesirable to aspirational through custom fabric compositions and elevated designs. Founded in Byron Bay, Sālli has a new vision for intentional women, enabling authentic embodiment. Health and style are one concept. Visit **salliactive.com.au** IG: **@salliactive**

HER AND GLORY



Her & Glory is a New York–based lifestyle brand rooted in timeless design and mindful, season-less style. Through premium-quality pieces, the brand creates space for women to connect and live in their own glory. Photography by Ella Cochrane. Visit **herandglory.com** IG: **@herandglory**

RBASICS



Rbasics believes in the power of simplicity, blending Scandinavian minimalism with Swiss precision to create timeless menswear. Made in Portugal with sustainable materials, each piece focuses on quality, comfort, and longevity, following a 'less, but better' philosophy for refined, responsible craftsmanship. Visit **rbasicsofficial.com** IG: **@rbasics.official**

The Art of the Vow

1. BELLA KINSELLA is a wedding photographer based in Omaha, Nebraska travelling worldwide. Her approach is rooted in authentic storytelling driven by a heart for serving each couple with intentional care and connection. Her work caters to couples seeking timeless editorial photos with a dreamy nostalgic flare. Visit **bellakinsellaphoto.com** IG: **@bellakinsellphoto**

2. CLAUDIA SEGUI is a destination wedding photographer based in Florida. She creates wedding photographs that feel as elegant as they are intimate, an interplay of emotion, light, and a deep sense of place. Visit **claudiasegui.com** IG: **@claudiaseguiphotography**

3. Joanna of **THAT WEDDINGS** believes that the best photographs start with trust. Photographing weddings across the UK and Europe, she blends documentary honesty with editorial elegance, helping couples feel completely themselves while creating timeless, heartfelt imagery. Visit **thatweddings.com** IG: **@thatweddings**

4. MARTYNA EICHHORN. Understated, refined, timeless. A Germany-based photographer whose imagery favours clean lines and natural light - weddings captured with editorial elegance and nothing that distracts from the moment. Visit **martyna-eichhorn.de** IG: **@martyna.eichhorn**

5. BRENDA BORGIA is a destination wedding photographer based in Naples, available across Italy and worldwide. Blending an editorial eye with a documentary approach, she uses digital and analog film to capture couples being effortlessly themselves. She preserves intimate, spontaneous moments with refined elegance. Visit **brendaborgiaph.com** IG: **@brendaborgiaph**

6. Nashville-based photographer **HANNAH OBREMSKEY** is known for her editorial approach to modern romance, blending cinematic storytelling with refined luxury aesthetics. Her work captures intimate moments with a fashion-forward, timeless perspective. Visit **hannahobremskey.com** IG: **@hannahobremskeyphoto**

7. Italian destination wedding photographer **ALICE SANTELLA** creates emotionally driven photographs for modern couples who appreciate an artistic and refined visual aesthetic. Shooting both digital and film, her work combines a sensitive, candid approach with a strong focus on composition, light, and elegant imagery. Visit **alicesantella.com** IG: **@yours.alicewedding**

8. SASHA PEPPER approaches bridal portraiture as an artistic practice, creating imagery with depth, restraint and intention. Guided by light, form and composition, her work moves beyond documentation to create photographs that are evocative, enduring and deeply personal, while retaining an effortless sense of elegance through artistry. Visit **sashapepperphotography.com** IG: **@sashapepperphotography**

9. STUDIO LES FLEURS - Canadian-based wedding photographer Anne Leblanc travels for love, capturing timeless, editorial and poetic moments. Her approach blends documentary storytelling with elegant portraiture, gently guiding couples while preserving natural emotion. She creates visual heirlooms that reflect the beauty, connection and atmosphere of your wedding day. Visit **studiolesfleurs.com** IG: **@studiolesfleurs**

10. Based in Chicago and St Louis, **DEVAE PHOTOGRAPHY** specialises in luxury weddings—captured with intention, artistry, and a timeless sense of style. With a background in modelling and a refined eye for detail, Birgit DeVae creates imagery that blends an editorial approach with honest, unscripted moments. Visit **devaephotography.com** IG: **@devaephotography**

11. STEFFI JASTRAM, a luxury wedding photographer in Mallorca, captures weddings with timeless elegance and editorial refinement. Against the Mediterranean backdrop, architecture, light, and emotion merge into extraordinary imagery, celebrating modern luxury, sophisticated romance. Visit **steffi-jastram.de** IG: **@steffijastramfotografie**

12. Founded by Federica & Guillermo, **SOUL LOVERS** is a destination wedding photography studio based between Italy and Mexico, documenting celebrations worldwide through a blend of documentary sensitivity and editorial refinement. Their imagery preserves not only how a wedding looked, but the atmosphere, emotion, and energy that made it unforgettable. Visit **soulloverswedding.com** IG: **@soulloverswedding_**

13. BY ANNA CLAIRE is a wedding photographer known for refined, emotionally driven imagery that blends timeless elegance with a modern storytelling and documentary approach. Her work focuses on authentic connection, intentional detail, and elevated visual narratives, creating photographs that feel both cinematic and deeply personal for couples and their loved ones. Visit **byannaclaire.com** IG: **@byannaclaire**

14. Inspired by travel, art, architecture, and a sense of place, **SISTER CITY PHOTOGRAPHY** creates evocative editorial wedding imagery that feels timeless, effortless, and deeply personal. Visit **sistercityphotography.com** IG: **@sistercityphotography**

15. LOVE, GIGI EVENT DESIGN is a luxury wedding planning and design studio creating bespoke celebrations with intentional detail, elevated aesthetics, and unforgettable guest experiences. Based in Florida, travelling worldwide. Visit **lovegigievents.com** IG: **@lovegigievents**

16. Founded by Kat Bailey, **SIMPLY SOCIALS** specialises in authentic, story-led content for modern couples. Blending emotion with a thoughtful and unobtrusive approach, the brand captures the moments that matter most, creating timeless memories designed to be felt as much as they are seen. Visit **simplysocials.co.uk** IG: **@simplysocials_**

17. Adrienne and Corey Pasman, the married couple behind **THE PASMANS PHOTO AND FILM**, share a passion for capturing photos the way memories feel. Based in Hawaii and travelling worldwide, the pair commemorates your most treasured moments on digital, film, and super 8. Visit **thepasmans.com** IG: **@thepasmans**







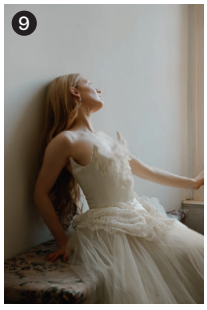




























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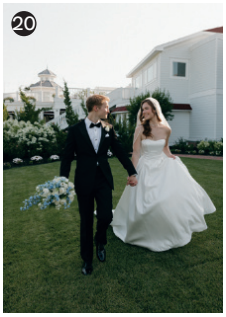
The Art of the Vow





18. ELH WEDDINGS is a London based luxury wedding planning company. Known for beautifully orchestrated weddings defined by meticulous planning and exceptional creativity. Founder Eleanor Hope brings fifteen years experience across London venues, and private estates in the South West. Photography by Kay's Atelier. Visit **elhweddings.com** IG: **@elhweddings**

19. The iconic jasmine-clad courtyard at **VILLA SAVINO** captures the timeless elegance of this 18th-century historic estate in the heart of Montevecchia Park. Italian heritage, refined architecture and natural beauty come together for unforgettable weddings and private events. Shot by: Avenue Studio Fotografi. Visit **villasavino.com** IG: **@villa_savino**





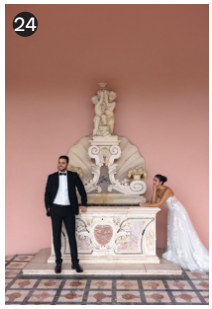
20. RACHEL LOPEZ PHOTOGRAPHY creates emotive, organic wedding imagery inspired by faith and love. Through her artistry, Rachel honours the beauty and sacredness of marriage, capturing authentic moments with warmth and intention. Visit **rachellopezphotos.com** IG: **@rachellopezphotos**

21. GIUSEPPE SUMA is an Italian wedding photographer whose work moves between fashion and documentary. Defined by a refined use of light, space, and restraint, his imagery captures weddings with quiet intensity, offering a contemporary, editorial perspective for a discerning international clientele. Visit **giuseppesuma.it** IG: **@sumawedstudio**

22. OLIVER J PHOTOGRAPHY is a UK and Europe-based wedding photographer creating modern, editorial imagery with depth, style, and intention. Inspired by fashion, art, and architecture, Oliver documents celebrations with a refined approach. Visit **oliverjphotography.com** IG: **@oliverj_photography**





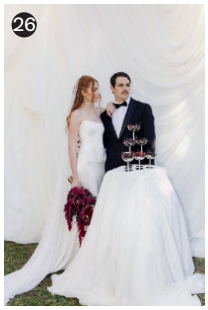


23. Australia-based wedding photographer **ALIX DUBOIS** is recognised for her distinctive editorial eye. Influenced by her French heritage, she creates refined imagery through artful direction and an instinctive understanding of movement, connection and emotion. Visit **alixdubois.com.au** IG: **@alixduboisphotography**

24. ANASTASIA NAGIBINA is a Florida wedding photographer who blends documentary and editorial styles. Using film and digital, she creates romantic, timeless photos that celebrate real emotion and storytelling, preserving intimate moments with honesty, warmth, depth, and a subtle fashion sense. Visit **anastasianagibinaph.com** IG: **@anastasianagibina.ph**

25. ARTIZWED is a wedding photographer known for capturing authentic stories with an elegant, timeless aesthetic. His work blends documentary sensitivity with an editorial eye, creating images that go beyond the moment. With a discreet, human approach, he turns each wedding into a sophisticated visual narrative. Visit **artizwed.com** IG: **@artiz.wed**







26. MERISSA D PHOTO is a U.S.-based destination wedding and lifestyle photographer. Blending digital and film, she captures cherished moments with romantic realism. Her imagery balances editorial elegance with authentic documentary storytelling, creating timeless archives of life's most meaningful celebrations worldwide. Visit **merissadphoto.com** IG: **@merissadphoto**

27. Based in Europe and the US, **LEAH GUNN** brings sixteen years of experience to the wedding photography industry. She works intentionally with clients to produce authentic, documentary imagery. Her elevated work is defined by a film-forward style that merges celebration with refined detail. Visit **leahgunnphoto.com** IG: **@leahgunnphoto**







28. Recognised by DWP Insider as one of the World's Top Wedding Planners 2026, **NICOLE PLEASE WEDDINGS** plans luxury destination weddings for international couples, seamlessly blending cultures. Nicole and her team craft personal celebrations where beauty and emotion meet precision and Swiss-level execution. Every detail is expertly orchestrated, allowing couples to feel present, confident and immersed. Visit **nicoleplease.com** IG: **@nicolepleaseweddings**



29. CAMI GRACE PHOTOGRAPHY is a Texas & destination wedding photographer capturing celebrations through honest, emotional storytelling and intentional imagery. Celebrating genuine connection, intimacy and joy, each photograph reflects the unique essence of every couple. Visit **camigracephotography.com** IG: **@camigracephotography**

30. KRISTINA FERRI is a wedding photographer based in Siena, Tuscany, available worldwide. Her editorial, vintage-inspired style photography captures timeless elegance and authentic emotions. Visit **kristinaferri.com** IG: **@kristinaferri_photographer**

31. THE POST WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER blends candid and posed photography to authentically capture every wedding while guiding couples to feel confident and relaxed. Based in Washington, DC, she travels for weddings and elopements worldwide, believing wedding days should be joyful, fun, and unforgettable. Visit **thepostweddingphotographer.com** IG: **@thepostweddingphotographer**







32. RAW is a Mexico-based destination wedding photographer known for curating refined, emotive imagery with an editorial edge. Her work blends candid, documentary-style moments with cinematic storytelling, creating imagery that feels both timeless and deeply intentional — turning fleeting moments into forever art. Visit **rawbyrenataharo.com** IG: **@rawbyrenataharo**

33. JULIA STROUD Photography is a worldwide luxury wedding photographer based out of Northwest Arkansas. She prioritises colourful, vibrant imagery in both digital and film that reflect her couples' personality and vibe. Visit **juliastroud.com** IG: **@juliastroudphoto**

34. NINA MARTIN PHOTOGRAPHY is a husband and wife team based in the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, specialising in crafting authentic stories. Their wedding photography and films combine editorial elegance with intentional experiences, creating a lasting legacy illuminated by light and genuine connection. Wedding Planner: Rosalina Torres. Visit **ninamartinphoto.com** and follow **@ninamartinphotography** on IG to discover more.

35. Alex Andino of **CINEMATICAWEDDINGS** captures intimate celebrations through a cinematic, fashion-led lens inspired by film, movement, and atmosphere. His imagery blends documentary emotion with editorial composition across destination weddings and modern elopements worldwide. Visit **cinematicaweddings.com** IG: **@cinematicaweddings**

36. Katie Swider of **ANCHORED FILMS** lives for the life of the story. Emotion and an honest, editorial documentary style is her main method of storytelling. Her work is rooted in intention, light, and connection, creating imagery that feels both artful and deeply personal. Chicago based, available worldwide. Visit **anchoredfilms.com** IG: **@anchoredfilms**

37. PHOTOS BY AVE is a Knoxville-based wedding photography brand blending documentary storytelling with an editorial touch. Avery Shoopman captures genuine connection, natural movement, and unscripted moments through warm, film-inspired imagery, preserving exactly how each wedding day felt. Visit **photosbyave.photos** IG: **@photosbyave_**

38. EMILY BATTLES PHOTOGRAPHY specialises in capturing wedding weekends all over the world while giving her clients a very intentionally curated experience. Emily uses both film and digital to curate a beautiful blended gallery for her clients full of candid, editorial, and organic moments. Visit **emilybattlesphotography.com** IG: **@emily.battles**

39. BELLA CAPRI preserves the fleeting hours of your day inspired by laughter, intention, and art. She wants your images to age with you, yet still evoke the same warmth and delight years from now. Bella is a film and digital photographer based in Santa Barbara, California, and travels worldwide. Visit **bellacapriphoto.com** IG: **@bellacapriphoto**

40. Allie Dykstra of **ALEXANDRAE PHOTO** is an editorial wedding photographer guided by energy and intuition with an eye for fashion and design. Blending a documentary style approach for capturing emotion with a fine-artist's eye for posing, composition and details, her work is an authentic and artful storytelling of your wedding day. Visit **alexandraephoto.com** IG: **@alexandrae.photo**

41. KRYSTIN WHITTOM is a documentary-style destination wedding and elopement photographer based in Hawaii, travelling worldwide. She captures genuine emotions, meaningful connections, and love as they naturally unfold, creating timeless imagery on digital and 35mm film. Her work is rooted in intention, blending the artistry of film with modern elegance. Visit **krystinwhittomphotography.mypixieset.com** IG: **@krystinwhittomphoto**

42. London-based wedding content studio **ELLE DAVIES CONTENT** is discreet, supportive and ever-present. Capturing the raw, authentic moments as they unfold on iPhone and vintage camcorder, delivering curated reels and videos. EDC is at the heart of the next generation of wedding documentation, fast becoming a non-negotiable for the modern couple. Visit **elledaviescontent.com** IG: **@elledavies.content**

43. DREAM WEDDINGS EUROPE is a full-service wedding agency crafting seamless celebrations across France, Portugal and Italy. With a focus on discretion, precision, and honesty, each event unfolds effortlessly. Visit **dreamweddingseurope.com** IG: **@dreamweddingseurope**

44. MADISON SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY documents weddings with an intentional, emotional approach, illustrating love stories in a true authentic style. She has a strong eye for composition, light, and capturing heartfelt moments meant to last. Visit **madisonsmithphoto.com** IG: **@madisontsmithphoto**

45. BRIGHT LIGHT WEDDINGS brings an editorial perspective to modern celebrations, creating imagery that balances modern composition with classic storytelling. From destination weddings such as Ashleigh and Jamir's wedding in Santorini, through to local celebrations in Australia and Europe, their photography is defined by elegant storytelling and a considered sense of place. Visit **brightlightweddings.com** IG: **@brightlightweddings**

46. THE INLOVE PHOTOGRAPHERS are a destination wedding photography studio creating timeless, editorial imagery for modern couples worldwide. Led by Mauricio & Sergio, the studio captures genuine emotion with an unobtrusive approach, transforming fleeting moments into enduring photographs that celebrate every unique love story. Visit **theinlovephotographers.com** IG: **@the.inlove.photographers**

47. MOANA GHIANDONI PHOTOGRAPHY is an Italian photographer based in the South of France, specialising in destination weddings across Europe. Her work balances editorial elegance with genuine moments, creating images that feel effortless, refined and true to every couple. Visit **moanaghiandoni.com** IG: **@moanaghiandoniphotography**

48. D STUDIO WEDDINGS believe the most meaningful moments happen naturally. Through a blend of documentary observation and editorial aesthetics, they create sophisticated, emotional photographs that preserve your story with authenticity, beauty, and a timeless perspective. Visit **dstudioweddings.co** IG: **@d___s___w**

49. Australian editorial wedding photographer **ELLE RUTLEDGE** creates timeless imagery inspired by fashion, architecture and fine art. Guided by sculptural light and authentic human connection, her work balances refined editorial aesthetics with genuine emotion and enduring elegance. Visit **ellerutledgephotography.mypixieset.com** IG: **@ellerutledge_photography**

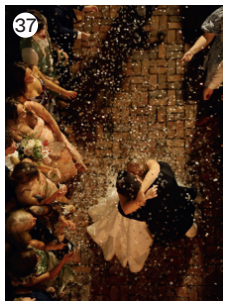
50. EMILY PARKER is an East Coast wedding photographer creating documentary-driven photographs rooted in movement, emotion, and storytelling. Blending digital and film, she captures candid, honest moments for couples who value connection over perfection. Visit **emilyparkerphoto.com** IG: **@emilyparkerphoto**

51. With **EMMA COSS**, moments become timeless. With an editorial eye and authentic approach, Emma frames genuine emotion with grace and artistry, creating photographs that feel both natural and meticulously crafted — images that linger, resonate, and define the essence of real, heartfelt stories. Visit **emmacossphotography.com** IG: **@emmacossphotography**

52. RACHEL LOUISE is a Glasgow-based makeup artist specialising in bridal, working across the UK and internationally. Known for her signature balance of soft, timeless elegance and a modern, sultry edge, she enhances natural beauty with a precise, detail-led approach. Hair by Kimberly Logie. Visit **rachellouise.com** IG: **@rachellouisebridal**

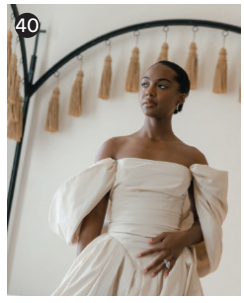


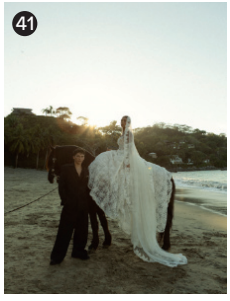


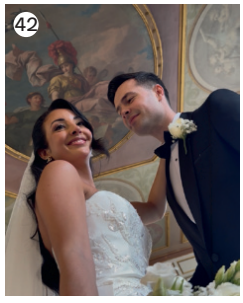






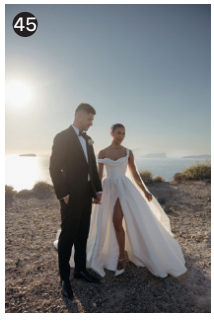






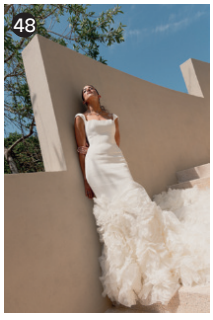




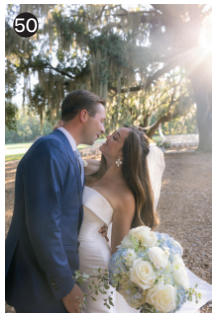
















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Beauty Secrets







1. Discover the Graceful Rose Tonic by **ROSEWOOD PREMIUM SKINCARE**, a facial spray and summer essential made in Germany. It is enriched with pure rose water and selected actives. The lightweight mist helps to leave your skin feeling hydrated and revitalised wherever the day takes you. The perfect travel companion for a fresh, radiant-looking complexion. Visit **rosewoodskin.com** IG: **@rosewood.skincare**

2. Inspired by generations of South Asian ritual, Tēl by **KIKI LONDON** is a Vegan Society certified botanical hair, scalp and beard oil. Crafted to nourish hair with moisture, it is designed to leave hair looking and feeling thicker, softer and less dry. Visit **kikildn.com** IG: **@kikildnuk**

3. DIALOGUE was born from the belief that what we say to ourselves matters as much as what we put on our skin. Each ritual pairs plant powered organic ingredients with guided affirmations, rooted in astrology's oldest wisdom - not to define you, but to help you understand yourself, and lead a life in alignment. Visit **dialogueskincare.com** IG: **@dialogueskincare**





4. What's your brain care routine? Start with **MINDBYTE**'s high DHA omega 3: developed by neuroscientists to help support normal brain function. Made from sustainably grown algae with effortlessly small softgels and no fishy aftertaste. Save 15% with code VF15 (expires 12/10/26). Visit **mindbyte.com** and follow **@mindbyte** on IG.

5. PEAL is bringing the heat. Their air-activated patches aim to deliver up to eight hours of on-demand warmth, worn directly on skin and sit invisibly under any outfit. Each patch is also made of just six natural ingredients. No mess, no fuss, just warmth. Visit **pealpatches.com** IG: **@peal.patches**

6. LUYANA SKINCARE. Ancient knowledge. Award-winning results. Nilotica Devotion is made with a rare Nilotica shea harvested along the Nile basin. A melt-into-skin butter that is designed to nourish with moisture. Luxury African botanical skincare, formulated in Copenhagen. Visit **luyanaskincare.com** and follow **@luyanaskincare** on IG.









7. Deity by **ATARAXIA**, described as one of the first mystical gourmands, is a finalist at the 2026 Art and Olfaction Awards. Natural honey, dark cocoa, tobacco blonde and precious resin absolutes. Visit **ataraxiaperfumery.com** IG: **@ataraxia_perfumes**

8. THE GOOD OIL Byron Bay is an artisan skincare brand rooted in natural beauty. For over 30 years they have handcrafted organic, cold pressed plant oils for skin and hair. Blending nature's purest ingredients with timeless formulations, their products honour simplicity, sustainability, and the power of plant skincare. Visit **thegoodoil.com** IG: **@thegoodoilbyronbay**

9. Rooted in timeless beauty rituals, the **NOVABEAU** Castor Oil Wrap Set combines 100% pure cold-pressed castor oil with reusable organic cotton wraps. A luxurious self-care essential, thoughtfully designed to help elevate everyday self-care with comfort, simplicity, and effortless elegance. Visit **novabeau.eu** IG: **@novabeau_official**







10. The Vitamin K Eye Cream from **PRESCRIPTION SKINCARE** is clinically formulated for the delicate eye area to help reduce the appearance of dark circles, puffiness, and fine lines. Your eye contour is left looking brighter and smoother. Visit **prescription-beauty.com** and follow **@prescription_skincare** on IG.

11. EARTHY MAKEUP defines a new era of conscious beauty, where earthy tones meet skin-loving formulas. Designed in Italy and honoured by the Vegan Beauty Awards, their products transform effortless elegance into a refined, modern ritual. Pictured is their lipstick in the shade of 'EarthyLove'. Visit **earthymakeup.com** IG: **@earthymakeup**

12. BO is helping to redefine protein for women, bridging the gap between functional nutrition and indulgence. Founded by Mariana, who believes women deserve better protein, Bo bars and powders are designed to suit women's bodies while tasting like dessert. Available across the UK and Europe. Visit **boprotein.com** IG: **@bo.protein**





13. Quietly building a loyal following, Irish beauty brand **BEAUTY BY C.E.D** is proving that luxury can be accessible. Every collection is crafted to transform everyday beauty routines into moments of calm indulgence. Visit **beautybyced.com** and follow **@beautybyced** on IG.

14. SPARKL's mission is to help make everyone love their smile by building confidence through oral beauty routines. The Daily Glow Duo pairs stain removal polish, an enamel-safe whitening powder, with glow serum, a colour-correcting brightener. The Duo is designed to help to remove the appearance of dental stains. Peroxide-free, enamel-safe. Visit **trysparkl.com** and follow **@trysparkl** on IG.

15. Healthy hair starts at the scalp. **MICKY DAY**'s Daily Purity Shampoo gently lifts dandruff-causing build-up, while the Daily Nourishment Conditioner replenishes moisture. The shampoo contains salicylic acid while the conditioner contains shea butter, argan oil and pro-vitamin B5. Hair is left feeling balanced, hydrated and visibly healthier after every wash. Visit **mickyday.com** IG: **@mickyday_**

16. Following a season of international growth, **HONEYSUCC'L JO** remains an exciting brand in the luxury haircare space. Celebrated for its science-backed formulas and elevated approach to healthy-looking hair, the brand continues to redefine everyday haircare. Visit **honeysuccljo.co** IG: **@honeysuccljo**

17. Refresh your hair with the **INIS** Hair Care range, enriched with sea mineral extracts. The products nourish with moisture and help to leave your hair appearing shiny. Sulphate and silicone free, they are suitable for all hair types, including colour-treated hair. Shampoo (300ml), Conditioner (250ml), and Sea Salt Spray (150ml). Visit **inis.com** IG: **@inisenergyofthesea**

18. GALLERY BY FLO is a curated destination for global scent discovery and niche perfumery. Inspired by the atmosphere surrounding an artist's studio, its Atelier line captures moments of the creative process - incense burning at a worktable, tea beside unfinished sketches, late nights, balconies, gardens, and quiet pauses between ideas. Visit **gallerybyflo.com** IG: **@gallerybyflo_**

19. ALTA MAREA is a prestige Made-in-Italy suncare brand that combines high-performance, science-backed sun protection with sensorial textures. Their hero facial SPF, LA LUCE Daily Sun Serum SPF 50, is crafted with biomimetic peptides and prebiotic ferment. The face serum is designed to activate collagen and strengthen the look of the skin barrier. Visit **altamareaskin.com** IG: **@altamareaskin**

20. Before the serums, before the creams, comes water. **NGILLA FLOW** is designed to refresh the way water feels on skin and hair through refined filtration and elevated design. Designed for the modern bathroom. Water, refined. Visit **ngillaflow.com** IG: **@ngillaflow**

21. RACONTEUSE SKINCARE: The Lagoon of Lightness Cleanser is a gentle companion for sensitive skin. It blends botanicals with Kakadu plum. It feels lightweight, refreshing, and calming and brings a touch of wonder to everyday rituals. Photography by Jelica-Ann Pascual. Visit **raconteuseskincare.com** IG: **@raconteuseskincare**

22. An evening ritual of exceptional craftsmanship. Handcrafted in small batches by licensed esthetician **CHANLA CHAU**, this velvety night treatment blends bakuchiol, botanical stem cells, and super fruits. Wake to a complexion that feels smoother and appears luminous. Shop Super Fruit Night Treatment. Visit **chanlachaucosmetics.com** IG: **@chanla.chau.cosmetics**

23. HOUSE OF TANS is a luxury tanning brand built on intentional glow. Created for the modern tanner who refuses to compromise, their Intense Tanning Cream, Gel and Balm collection is powered by advanced skin technology. Visit **houseoftansofficial.com** IG: **@houseoftansofficial**

24. AVYA SKINCARE combines Ayurveda + Science to create clean, cruelty-free, plant-based products. Shown: Sheer-Tinted Moisturiser with SPF40. Available in Fair/Light and Medium. Suitable for all skin types. Visit **avyaskincare.com** IG: **@avyaskincare**

25. Two products. One ritual. **KIONI**'s bio-fermented Hydrate & Balance Multi-Biotic Cleanser and Barrier Protect All-In-One Serum-Moisturiser work together to leave skin feeling soft, nourished with moisture and balanced. Fragrance-free, gentle, sensitive-skin friendly, Australian made. Visit **kioniskin.com** IG: **@kioniskin**

26. GLAM ARTISTRY BEAUTY is a non-toxic luxury vegan skincare brand. They help empower, educate and build self confidence in women of all backgrounds and nationalities, helping them to unmask their inner beauty. Photography by Fluffmedia. Visit **glamartistrybeauty.com** IG: **@glamartistrybeauty**

27. FLOATING FEET is the beauty essential redefining how women wear heels. Created for long days and glamorous nights, their smooth, fast-absorbing formula helps support your feet so you can move effortlessly and feel confident from the first step to the final moment. Style and comfort, beautifully combined. Visit **floatingfeet.com.au** IG: **@floatingfeetau**

28. VIBRANT SKIN introduces their VIBRANT DESERT VIBE®. It is designed to deliver ultimate barrier support and leave skin feeling hydrated. It contains ingredients including beta-glucan, centella asiatica, and prickly pear. Visit **vibrantskin.com** IG: **@vibrantskinline**

29. MNQA's Cloud Sealing Water is a next-generation leave-in treatment formulated to help leave your skin feeling hydrated. It is enriched with orchid white milk, fermented rice water, and a hyaluronic acid complex. It is designed to leave your hair feeling soft and appearing shiny. Visit **mnqabyq.com** IG: **@mnqabyq**

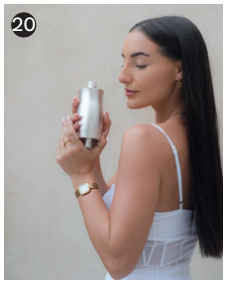


























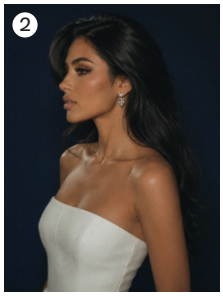




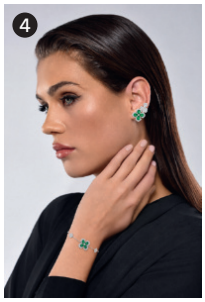
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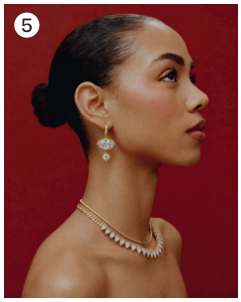
The Jewellery Box



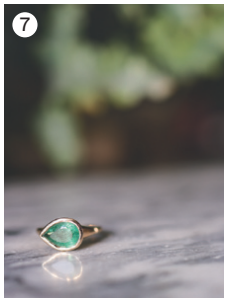


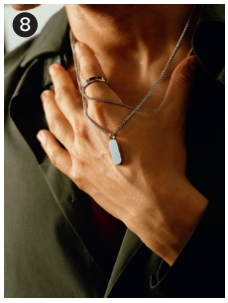


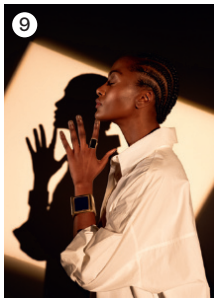










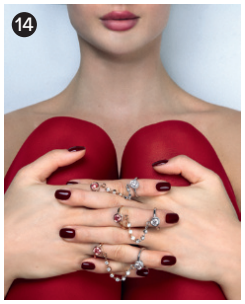
















1. Designed by Omer Herzog, **OMÈ** is a handcrafted jewellery brand shaped by memory, femininity and a love for natural materials. Worn by women with an instinctive way of dressing, Omè brings together pearls, gemstones and diamonds in pieces that feel fresh, chic and never too much. Visit **ome-ome.com** IG: **@ome.____**

2. THE OUZ CO introduces their Grace Earrings - the kind of sparkle that changes the whole look. A brilliant round-cut stone meets a pear-shaped drop in a clean, face-framing silhouette. Polished but never predictable, these earrings bring just enough drama to make every entrance feel intentional. Visit **theouzco.com** IG: **@theouzco**

3. Founded by actor and designer Romina D'Ugo, **WILYMI** is a contemporary jewellery house shaped by Italian heritage, creating limited-edition collections, singular fine jewellery, and bespoke heirlooms. Existing gold, diamonds, and inherited gemstones are reimagined as modern heirlooms designed to accompany every chapter of a well-lived life. Visit **wilymi.com** IG: **@wilymijewelryco**

4. THE WHITE GEM is a Miami-based fine jewellery house celebrated for its refined craftsmanship and modern elegance. Part of the Florea Collection, these Climber Earrings are inspired by blooming flowers. Featuring vivid emeralds framed by luminous pavé diamonds, the design follows the curve of the ear, creating a graceful interplay of colour, light, and movement. Visit **thewhitegem.com** IG: **@thewhitegem**

5. MUI DIAMONDS is a fine jewellery house founded by Clarice Ng, specialising in lab-grown diamonds. Balancing accessibility with modern luxury, they create bespoke pieces and made-to-order collections that combine craftsmanship with contemporary interpretations of diamonds for a new generation. Visit **muidiamonds.com** IG: **@mui_diamonds**

6. MONDAY GEMS STUDIO is a New York fine jewellery house crafting custom pieces for the milestones and the magic in between. Each piece is an heirloom in the making, set with coloured gemstones as vivid as the stories they carry. Bold, intentional, and made for a life well adorned. Visit **mondaygems.com** and **@mondaygemsstudio** on IG and TikTok.

7. BRAVAIS FINE JEWELRY, founded by chemical engineer Abigail Koppes, Ph.D., hand-carves one-of-one gemstone original heirlooms using lost-wax casting, alongside curated fine jewellery sourced through leading American suppliers. Visit **bravaisfinejewelry.org** IG: **@bravais_fine_jewelry**

8. SYLVIAN GRANT creates refined, understated jewellery designed for modern everyday wear. Rooted in timeless design, each piece balances clean lines, subtle detail, and effortless versatility. Durable enough for daily life and elevated enough for any occasion, Sylvian Grant jewellery is made to be worn your way—alone, layered, and styled without limits. Visit **sylviangrant.com** IG: **@sylviangrant**

9. STUDIO ÍMÃ BRASIL crafts contemporary jewellery that captures presence and individuality. With a refined aesthetic and bold presence, each piece blends artistic expression with refined design, creating one-of-a-kind elegant statements. Visit **studioima.shop** IG: **@studioimabrasil**

10. VESTIGM is a London-based silver jewellery brand accented by natural stones. Crafted with restraint and softness, each piece bears witness to a life unfolding, accompanying moments that shape us, from new beginnings to enduring promises and all that follows. Visit **vestigm.com** IG: **@vestigm_official**

11. NO.88 JEWELLERY creates meaningful jewellery inspired by the landscapes of Northern Ireland's Causeway Coast. The Always With You Bracelet is a timeless symbol of love, connection and the stories that stay with us. Visit **no88jewellery.com** IG: **@no.88jewellery**

12. STUDIO RYBKO is a Canadian fine jewellery house creating sculptural pieces in solid 14K gold. CORE, the brand's newest collection, distills the timeless symbolism of the egg into bold, enduring jewellery. Designed to become part of your story. Visit **studiorybko.com** IG: **@studio.rybko**

13. Born from a passion for gemstones and bold femininity, **RAPHAËLLE COQBLIN PARIS** crafts 18k gold talismans for women who wear their power. Vibrant stones, unapologetic radiance, timeless allure. Discover the Crush Nova collection. Visit **raphaellecoqblin.com** IG: **@raphaellecoqblin**

14. There is a new language in fine jewellery, and **APARTMENT6** is writing it. Technology made this possible — the pink diamond, once out of reach, now yours to own. Diamonds born from innovation, jewellery worn as the purest expression of you. Visit **apartment6.co.uk** IG: **@_apartment6**

15. LOVE, ELLISON was founded by Julie Liechty and is rooted in themes of giving back, heartache, and resilience. Each piece is created to tell your iconic and bold story. Shells, sea forms, and vintage details come together in statement pieces made for your layered life. Photography by: Gracie B Collins. Styling by: Lauren Bender Grove. Visit **loveellison.com** IG: **@theloveellison**

16. GALER is a contemporary fine jewellery house inspired by timeless cultural symbols. Designed in Bucharest, crafted in solid gold and natural diamonds, each piece transforms heritage into a refined expression of modern identity. Distinctive by design, GALER creates jewellery with presence, meaning and enduring appeal. Visit **galerjewelry.com** IG: **@galer_jewelry**

17. EX LIBRIS JEWELS specialises in antique and vintage fine jewellery, carefully curating unique pieces that have stood the test of time. With a focus on quality materials, lasting craftsmanship, and originality, you'll find pieces of history that no one else will have. Visit **exlibrisjewels.com** IG: **@exlibris_jewels**

18. HILLARY ALEXANDRIA is a Berlin-based fine jewellery brand creating handcrafted 14k gold, and sterling silver charms with natural stones and lab-grown diamonds, produced by artisans in Spain. Pieces are designed to layer onto jewellery already owned. The brand is female-founded, Black-owned, and available at Wolf & Badger. Visit **hillaryalexandria.com** IG: **@hillaryalexandria**

19. True beauty doesn't need to be created - it simply deserves to be revealed. This belief lies at the heart of **ZAZA&LILI**. Named after the founder's twin daughters, each piece is designed to become part of the woman who wears it, revealing the light, confidence and beauty already within. Visit **zaza-lili.com** IG: **@zazalili.jewellery**

20. GEORGINA KATE JEWELLERY creates modern heirlooms in solid gold, diamonds and sapphires. Handcrafted to order in Hatton Garden, London, each piece is designed to be layered, loved and worn every day. Fine jewellery with lasting meaning. Visit **georginakatejewellery.com** IG: **@georgina.kate.jewellery**

21. AREIA makes modern heirlooms for daily ritual. Designed between Iceland and Colombia, where quiet northern lights meet a richness of colour that lives all around. Each piece is handcrafted in recycled sterling silver by a women-led atelier in Thailand, made to be worn, treasured, and passed on. Visit **areiajewellery.com** IG: **@_areiajewellery**

22. Founded by owner Isobel, **GOLDEN GIRL AU** offers a thoughtfully curated collection of vintage gold jewellery, celebrating craftsmanship, enduring style and pieces with a story to tell. Visit **golden-girl.au** IG: **@goldengirl.au**

23. DIMOND LONDON is a third-generation jeweller specialising in bespoke engagement rings, known for exceptional diamonds, gemstones, and collaborative designs inspired by Art Deco and vintage styles. To start your bespoke jewellery journey visit **dimondlondon.com** IG: **@dimondlondon**

24. LAUREN MACKENZIE, founded by Lauren Wenstrup and Mackenzie Kinet, specialises in custom engagement rings, wedding bands, and modern fine jewellery. Featuring natural and lab grown diamonds, each piece reflects a balance of contemporary design and timeless craftsmanship. Shipping worldwide. Photography by: Bekah Ridings. Visit **lauren-mackenzie.com** IG & TikTok: **@lauren_mackenzie_jewelry**

25. LAUPHINE is a fine jewellery brand blending antique sensibility with modern wearability. Designed in 14k gold with natural diamonds, each piece is made to be worn daily and kept for years to come - modern heirlooms meant to be lived in. Visit **lauphine.com** IG: **@lauphine_**

26. THE FIFTH LANE is an Australian fine jewellery house creating bespoke engagement rings, wedding bands, and exceptional diamond jewellery. Guided by its philosophy, "From Earth to You", the brand transforms raw inspiration into sculptural designs that balance refined craftsmanship, contemporary elegance, understated luxury, and individuality. Visit **thefifthlane.com** IG: **@thefifthlane**

27. RAKHSH RAKHSHI is a New York City based luxury fashion brand founded by designer Hanya and her partner, Zouf. The brand transforms everyday fashion into collectible pieces through sculptural forms, vibrant colour and refined craftsmanship. Each design celebrates individuality with a sense of play, imagination and modern luxury. Visit **rakhshrakhshi.com** IG: **@rakhshrakhshi**

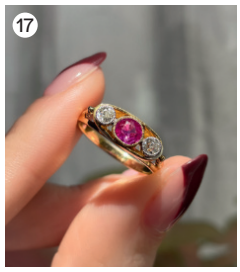
28. HEKAYA transforms the art, architecture and cultural heritage of Islamic civilisation into contemporary fine jewellery. Presented in their signature book-shaped packaging, each piece tells the story behind its inspiration, inviting discovery through the universal language of beauty. Visit **hekayajewellery.com** IG: **@hekaya_jewellery**

29. LOVELRI introduces a piece which is iconic in shape, modern in spirit, and finished by hand with the sort of patience the industry has largely forgotten. This is luxury for the couple whose taste is refined, and appreciate that the legacy of master craftsmanship matters. Visit **lovelri.com** IG: **@lovelri**

30. Ify is the designer and founder of **MOCA JEWELLERY**, a London-born jewellery brand inspired by family, creativity, and individuality. Trained in silversmithing in Toronto, she creates bold, handmade pieces using recycled silver and ethical stones, celebrating imperfection, character, and the stories jewellery carries. Photographer: Lubov Hysa. Model: Viktorija Kindere. Visit **mocajewellery.com** IG: **@mocajewellery**

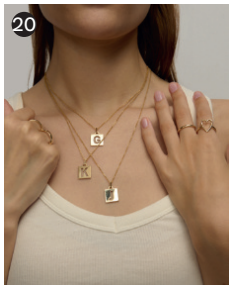
31. CHOSEN JEWELLERY was created for those seeking intentional living through unique jewellery. Crafted with stones chosen for their traditional associations, it provides a symbolic reminder to live with intention. Discover one of a kind jewellery at **chosenjewellery.co.uk** and follow **@chosenjewelleryuk** on IG.

32. ARMINE + AMBROSE's deliberate take on semi-fine jewellery is an imprint of their core belief that 'Bold in the Ordinary' is not only a look — it's a commitment to yourself that refuses to wait for permission, a special occasion, or someday. Featured are the Big Dream Hoops, The A-Chain Necklace, The 3-Cuff Set, and The Pinky Promise. Visit **armineandambrose.com** IG: **@armineandambrose**







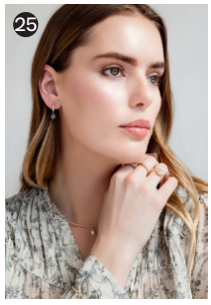




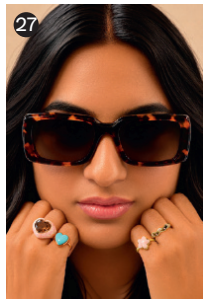




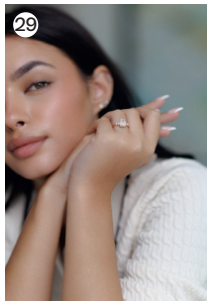


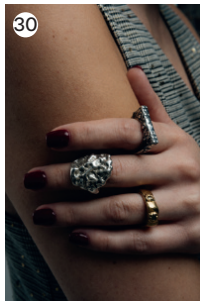










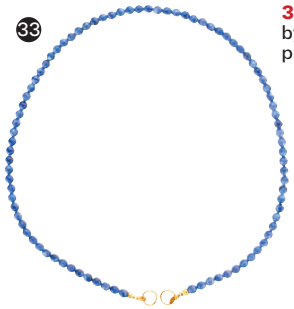






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The Jewellery Box



33. ORDOÑEZ LE creates one-of-a-kind and small-batch jewellery for those who know time is their greatest luxury. Made by designer April Le, luminous pearls, colourful gemstones and gold-filled details bring playful sophistication to distinctive pieces created to be worn, layered and made your own. Visit **ordonezle.com** IG: **@ordonezlejewelry**



34. OUROS JEWELS gives the classic solitaire a fresh perspective with distinctive designs made for modern love stories. From striking center stones to beautifully crafted settings, each ring is designed to stand out while keeping the focus on the diamond. Discover the collection at **ourosjewels.com** and follow **@ourosjewels** on IG.

35. DEL POZZO JEWELRY embraces ethereal beauty with this exquisite 14k yellow gold charm necklace, featuring a captivating butterfly pendant. Adorned with a striking blue AAA Australian Opal, and white diamonds, this necklace emanates elegance and charm. The pendant showcases intricate detailing, making it a perfect statement piece to elevate and ensemble. Visit **delpozzojewelry.luxury** IG: **@delpozzojewelry**





36. NYC based designer **PERRY GARGANO** handcrafts exquisite, alternative jewellery defined by a bold imaginative aesthetic. His work includes sculptural elements, from striking hand-carved cuffs, to rough hewn animal inspired earrings - perfect for the avant-garde collector seeking artistic attire. His made-in-house flagship store 242 Grand Jewelry in Williamsburg Brooklyn, is a favourite for some NYC creatives. Visit **perrygargano.com** IG: **@perrygargano**



37. AUGUSTINE JEWELS, recently shortlisted for Creative Jewellery Designer of the Year, is a British Luxury Gemstone Jeweller with boutiques in Notting Hill and New York's Upper East Side. The South of France Pink Topaz Cocktail Ring features a 14x10mm octagon Pink Topaz inspired by Provençal oleanders, available in Gold Vermeil, 9ct and 18ct Solid Gold. Visit **augustinejewels.com** IG: **@augustinejewels**





38. The 'Woman with a Wreath' ring by **A.LUBOMIRSKA FINE JEWELS** references classic Slavic and Byzantine stylisation as part of a unique collection, that brings a modern interpretation of European folklore motifs. Handcrafted in 18k gold, this piece combines matte and lustre finishes, and is embedded with diamonds, sapphires or emeralds. Visit **annalubomirska.com** IG: **@annalubomirska**



39. ARIA&CO curates contemporary 18k gold-plated steel jewellery, bringing sculptural forms and effortless polish to the modern wardrobe. Each piece is selected for refined everyday impact and understated statement appeal. Visit **aria-n-co.com** IG: **@ariacojewellery**

40. MEASHELL JEWELRY introduces their Champagne by the Pool bracelet. Pearls strung with sapphire, peridot, and amethyst charms in 14K solid gold. It catches the light every time you move. It's made for the days that call for a little more. Visit **meashell.com** IG: **@meashelljewelry**

The Lifestyle Edit



1. RUMOR Rosé: Crafted from the finest vineyards of Côtes de Provence, France, RUMOR Rosé is organic, vegan, with zero residual sugar. Elegant, refreshing, and refined, every bottle is a testament to rosé at its finest. Born in Provence. Poured around the world. Visit **rumorrose.com** IG: **@rumorrose**



2. NANI® is an independent Swiss luxury brand celebrating the bond between dogs and their people. It is the symbol of an eternal bond between you and your dog; a reflection of love, elegance, and total dedication. Handmade in Florence, each collection goes beyond the traditional walking set, bringing together matching jewellery, premium leather and engraved personalisation. Visit **nanipets.com** IG: **@nanipets_official**



3. SIP makes bar-quality cocktails without the alcohol, delivering all the flavour and sophistication of your favourite serves. Meet Mila Margarita & Cece Negroni, expertly crafted from natural ingredients with no added sugar. Available in convenient 200ml cans and elegant 700ml bottles, they're perfect for every occasion and everyone at the table, whether celebrating or simply unwinding together. Visit **sip-zero.com** IG: **@drink.sip.cocktails**

4. PREPPED PARENT reimagines the school year with a heritage-inspired collection that replaces last-minute thinking with timeless preparation. Every detail is thoughtfully considered, combining practicality with enduring style, so families can feel organised from the very first day. Designed to celebrate meaningful routines, today's traditions become tomorrow's treasured family heirlooms, passed down and remembered for years to come. Visit **preppedparent.com.au** IG: **@prepped.parent**





5. MI SORA is sparkling matcha reinventing the day-to-night drink. Functional, alcohol-free coolers with vitamins and adaptogens, formulated for calm, focused energy; 10% spirit-based cocktails made to be savoured slowly. Ceremonial grade matcha for every mood and moment. To view their full range online, visit **itsmisora.com** IG: **@itsmi_sora**



6. ENSŌ believes the foods we return to most often are the ones most worthy of care. Its Apple & Cinnamon Granola, slow-baked with freeze-dried apple, Saigon cinnamon, extra-virgin olive oil, and maple syrup, offers a design-minded ritual for the everyday table. Visit **ensoeats.com** IG: **@enso_granola**

7. DOUBLE OAK ESSENTIALS creates premium everyday accessories defined by timeless design, refined craftsmanship and lasting quality. From minimalist wallets and leather stretch belts to travel bags, each piece is thoughtfully designed to elevate daily life with effortless style and enduring performance. Photography by Guillermo Brinkmann. Visit **doubleoakessentials.com** IG: **@doubleoakessentials**

8. BARBRA IGNATIEV creates custom pet portraits using fine materials and a fun, study-like approach. Barbra learns about your pet and unfolds their character into each portrait, creating a lively, meaningful keepsake. Visit **barbraignatiev.com** IG: **@abarbarianheart**

9. BAMBOOCHI redefines children's fashion through certified organic cotton and distinctive prints admired by children and adults alike. Crafted in small batches with effortless elegance. Visit **bamboochikids.shop** IG: **@bamboochikids**

10. MEADOW MINI is a British luxury childrenswear brand creating timeless organic cotton clothing for babies and young children. Recently recognised with a prestigious industry award, the brand is dedicated to exceptional quality, comfort, and thoughtful design. Photography by: Bianca Williams. Visit **meadowmini.co.uk** IG: **@meadowmini_**

11. LEMON APPEAL, a lifestyle brand created by mother-daughter duo Anik and Sophie, brings the vibrant spirit of Southern Italy to British homes, collaborating with talented regional artisans. Featured is the Zagara tablecloth made of 100% linen and the unique, hand-painted Colto Ceramic Lemons, crafted by master artisans on the Amalfi Coast. All Lemon Appeal products are 100% made in Southern Italy. Visit **lemonappeal.com** IG: **@lemonappeal**

12. SUZE STUDIO is a Bristol, UK-based brand specialising in framed textiles that make your home feel effortlessly collected and layered. Inspired by her travels and Uzbekistan's Suzani embroidery, founder Suzy sources handmade textiles and transforms them into unique, framed art. Photography by: Katy Goutefangea. Visit **suzestudio.co.uk** IG: **@suzestudio**

13. ÄLSKAR GOLF founder Kim Tapper created the brand from a genuine passion for the game. Meaning "love" in Swedish, Älskar reflects this ethos through refined designs that blend fashion, functionality and modern golf culture, with feminine silhouettes and performance-driven comfort at their core. Visit **alskargolf.com** IG: **@alskargolf**

14. Founded in 2015, **CHAMORE CREATIONS** is an Australian wedding photography and filmmaking studio celebrated for its refined, editorial aesthetic and timeless approach to storytelling. Capturing extraordinary celebrations across Australia and internationally, Chamore Creations blends cinematic artistry with effortless elegance. Visit **chamorecreations.com** IG: **@chamorecreations**

15. Founded by Verity, a former Army Officer, **WAGS & WIGGLES** is inspired by her two springer spaniels, Perdy and Daisy. This female-owned boutique offers natural treats, toys, accessories and enrichment essentials, bringing quality, care and quiet luxury to everyday dog life. Visit **wagsandwigglespets.co.uk** IG: **@wagsandwigglespets**

16. The hallmark of true luxury is personalisation. At **AMATIVE CREATIVE**, they don't follow a signature look, they create one for every couple. Founded by fine art photographer Andrea Caresse Lewis, the studio is known for tailoring every gallery to match each couple's aesthetic—whether inspired by luminous film, deep editorial tones, or timeless natural colour. Serving couples worldwide, the studio transforms celebrations into enduring works of art. Visit **amativecreative.com** IG: **@amativecreative**

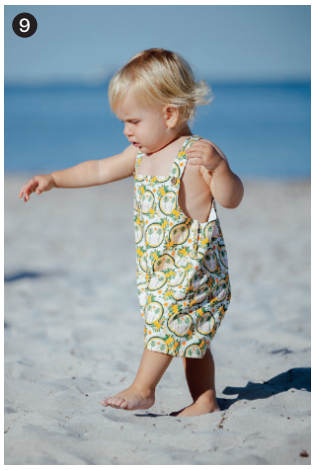
17. RAMÓN BILBAO CRIANZA. Fruit made to be felt. More than a century spent understanding the diverse origins of Rioja. A unique land they know and cultivate, resulting in a compelling balance of heritage and modernity, intensity and flavour, ripe depth and pure fruit character. Made for the senses. Visit **bodegasramonbilbao.com** IG: **@bodegasramonbilbao**

18. There are cakes made to be seen, and cakes made to be remembered. With her creations, pâtissière **KENZA BONNIER** transforms dessert into an experience. Inspired by gardens, seasonal ingredients and shared moments, each cake is handcrafted with attention to detail. Elegant yet generous, refined yet personal, her creations bring people together and turn every celebration into something unforgettable. Photography by: Malek Ben Hamida. For orders and enquiries visit **kenzabonnier.com** IG: **@kenza_bonnier**

19. HELLO SUNDAY is an Irish brand specialising in personalised keepsakes and hand embroidered knits for little ones. Founded by mother of two, Jen, it creates timeless pieces designed to capture childhood's priceless moments and become cherished keepsakes, celebrating memories as our children grow. Visit **hellosundaykids.com** IG: **@hellosundaykids**



























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The Lifestyle Edit





20. LAMB LONDON curates vintage childrenswear and hand-knitted pieces that celebrate nostalgia and longevity. Designed to be worn, loved and passed on, each garment carries its own story, keeping beautiful clothes in circulation across generations. Visit **lamblondon.co.uk** IG: **@lamb_ldn**

21. Handcrafted in Belgium, **ILLUS** creates timeless mirrors, architectural hardware, and interior accessories in brass and nickel. Each piece is crafted to elevate the room, blending quiet beauty, refined details, and authentic materials that gain character over time. Visit **illus-object.com** IG: **@illus_object**



22. LITTLE HARVESTERS offers premium baby food pouches. Their wholefood purées are rich in healthy fats and protein, designed to support early development. They contain bone broth, quality oils, superfoods and organic ingredients, with no added sugars or cheap fillers. Visit **littleharvesters.com.au** IG & TikTok: **@littleharvesters**

23. JEN C CLAY presents Ascend from the Radiance from Ruin series — a striking sculptural work in ceramic, glaze, glass, semi-precious crystals and gold foil. Exploring regeneration after destruction, the piece reveals beauty emerging through fractured forms, where light, transformation and renewal converge in moments of unexpected radiance. Visit **jencclay.com** IG: **@jencclay**







24. BANDABY helps families give animals a loving home, not a cage. After their debut collection of fabulous hamster homes sold out with five star reviews, a limited batch of their gorgeous aspen bedding has arrived: natural, tunnel-friendly and so soft it will make you wish you were a hamster, rabbit or guinea pig. Visit **bandaby.com** IG: **@we_are_bandaby**

25. TYSIKO raincoat is a high-quality, size-adjustable dog raincoat with sewn-in boots, designed to protect against rain and mud, reducing the need for frequent washing. Crafted for everyday practicality, it keeps dogs clean and comfortable in wet conditions. Recognised as one of the top 10 best Petcare innovations in Berlin. Visit **tysiko.com** IG: **@tysi_ko**

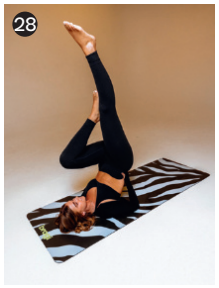




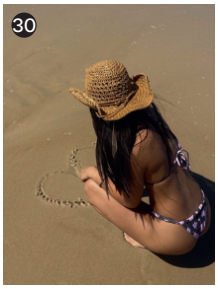
26. FRIENDSHEEP is a woman-owned sustainable brand creating unique reusable wool dryer balls, pet toys, and home décor. Handcrafted fair trade by women artisans in Nepal, every item purchased supports animal rescues, ocean conservation, and reforestation - over one million trees have been planted so far! Visit **friendsheepwool.com** IG: **@friendsheepwool**

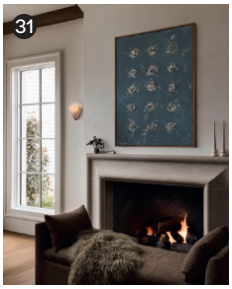
27. SHINE EQUINE helps to cleanse and condition delivering the look of brilliant shine. Their vegan, non-toxic, residue-free formulas contain nutrient-rich botanical ingredients, and no mineral oils, sulfates, or parabens. Premium grooming for horses, reimagined. Shot by: Ashleigh Magnus Photography. Visit **shinequine.com** IG: **@shineequine**

28. BROGI is a female-founded yoga brand creating premium mats and accessories designed to bring personality to every practice. Combining bold prints with high performance materials, Brogi encourages movement that's as fun as it is functional. Visit **brogiyoga.com** IG: **@brogi.yoga**









29. MOOSHI - not just pet accessories, a different way to live with your dog, through thoughtful design and style without compromise. For Mooshi, elegance should never end where the lead begins. To view the full collection visit **mooshi.ch** IG: **@mooshi_petlifestyle**

30. Born in the tropics of Queensland, Australia, **ISLE OF PALMS SWIM** goal is simple, to create beautiful swimwear that doesn't cost the earth. Creating hand-drawn swimwear inspired by long summer days by the beach. Modelled by Isannah Loquias. Visit **isleofpalmsswim.com.au** IG: **@isleofpalmsswim**

31. LAURA PETKA is a Dallas-based artist. Defined by raised clusters and layered surfaces, her work balances sculptural dimension with restraint. Each painting reflects the beauty of life's collected moments, creating pieces that are striking and deeply personal. Petka accepts limited commissions annually. Visit **laurapetkaart.com** IG: **@laurapetkaart**







32. COLOGNE BUTTER redefines performance cologne, amplifying attractiveness, confidence, and sophistication. Combining two routines in one, it's designed to moisturise skin with organic ingredients while delivering curated fragrances inspired by global travels. More than scent, it's presence in motion. Elevate your ritual. Own every room. Visit **colognebutter.com** and follow **@colognebutter** on IG.

33. DOGS BEFORE DUDES™ is for those who put their dog first. The brand creates bandanas in playful prints for pups and people with personality. Designed in Jupiter, Palm Beach County, Florida. Photography by Mia Bouyea. Visit **choosedogsbeforedudes.com** IG: **@choosedogsbeforedudes**

34. MATCHA SOCIETY begins with people behind the leaf. For generations, Japanese tea farmers have tended harvests with patience, precision and care. Their devotion is the foundation of every cup, including signature Banana Bread Matcha, where exceptional Japanese matcha meets familiar, nostalgic sweetness. Visit **matchasociety.com.au** IG: **@matchasocietyau**

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JOHN GALLIANO

Fashion's most indomitable rebel has a new partnership with Zara—and a peripatetic spirit

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
A fleeting moment when imagination, craft, and emotion arrive at the same time, usually at three in the morning.

Which talent would you most like to have?
To dance beautifully.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
"My darlings."

What is your greatest fear?
Witnessing, within my lifetime, the slow erosion of our future.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
The wandering artist. Perhaps someone like Diaghilev—gathering extraordinary souls together to create worlds that did not exist before.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Cruelty disguised as sophistication.

What is your greatest extravagance?
Time: to look, to listen, to disappear into research.

What is your favorite journey?
Walking anonymously through a city at night.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
That it reveals exhaustion before I do.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Don Quixote.

What is your greatest regret?
Moments where fear spoke louder than love.

On what occasion do you lie?
When protecting a dream before it is ready to be exposed.

When and where were you happiest?
In ateliers, backstage before a show, surrounded by chaos and possibility.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
I would silence my inner critic more often.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
A moth chasing light.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
A flamenco dancer in another century.

What is your most treasured possession?
My sketchbooks.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
Loneliness in a crowded room.

What do you most value in your friends?
Loyalty and wicked humor.

Who are your favorite writers?
Proust, Genet, Tennessee Williams, Cocteau, Angela Carter.

What are your favorite names?
Names that carry poetry—Louise, Carmen, Sebastian, Paloma.

Where would you like to live?
Somewhere between Paris, Andalusia, and a dream.

The

A M B R É E

Fragrance Family

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



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Fragrance lasts

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GENEVE

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