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VOGUE

May 2024



MORE IS MORE

MODELS FELICE NOVA NOORDHOFF (LEFT) AND LULU TENNEY LAYER IT ON.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEFAN RUIZ.

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Zendaya wears a Dolce & Gabbana Alta Moda dress. Bulgari High Jewelry ring. To get this look, try: Teint Idole Ultra Wear Foundation Stick, Blush Subtil Powder Blush in Rose Fresque, Hypnôse 5-Color Eyeshadow Palette in Fraicheur Rosée, Lash Idôle Mascara, Brow Shaping Powder Pencil, and L'Absolu Rouge Lipstick in Blush Classique. All by Lancôme. Hair: Kim Kimble; makeup, Raoul Alexandre. Details, see In This Issue.

Photographer: Annie Leibovitz.
Fashion Editor: Law Roach.



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DAVID YURMAN

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A black and white photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a plaid shirt, leaning her arms on the hood of a car. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The car's hood and front fender are visible in the foreground.

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Letter From the Editor



BLOOM IN LOVE

LEFT: FROM THE COSTUME INSTITUTE'S COLLECTION, TWO FALL 2023 LOEWE DESIGNS FLANKING A NINA RICCI EVENING ENSEMBLE FROM 1958. ABOVE: A WORK FROM THE LATE AMERICAN PAINTER ALBERT YORK.

Inspired Minds

INSPIRATION CAN COME FROM ANYWHERE—a painting, a piece of music, overheard conversation, an ephemeral moment in our lives. It's a precious thing, but not the *only* thing. Creativity requires so much more: follow-through, investment and risk, mettle, heart, courage.

I've been thinking about all of this in the wake of a fascinating season of fashion shows here and abroad—so many risk-taking collections by so many brilliant

designers—and as I have watched the curator Andrew Bolton and his collaborators and colleagues at The Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute prepare the exhibition “Sleeping Beauties.” Their work has reached a fever pitch ahead of the May opening.

Andrew has one of the most brilliant minds I've ever encountered. And he's always, always challenging himself. I watched him come up with the idea for “Sleeping Beauties,” taking a simple premise—how do we show the most fragile dresses from the museum's collection without

damaging them?—and imagining ways to animate these precious pieces with technology, including AI, and to engage all of our senses by evoking the natural world: touch, smell, sound, sight. Another curator may have mounted a perfectly nice show of dresses behind glass. This one will be immersive and dazzling—and you can get a spectacular preview in images by Steven Meisel in the pages that follow.

Immersion is all the rage right now. Everywhere you look there's another opportunity to have your senses overwhelmed: on IMAX screens, at concerts and art shows, and it is happening in fashion too, of course. There was no better example than John Galliano's amazing couture show for Maison Margiela in January on the banks of the Seine.

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LEFT: IMAGE COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, BFA.COM/HIPPOLYTE PETIT. RIGHT: COURTESY OF THE ESTATE OF ALBERT YORK AND DAVIS & LANGDALE COMPANY, NEW YORK.



Irina Shayk by Steven Meisel

SWAROVSKI

Letter From the Editor



MAJOR MARAUDERS

A JOHN GALLIANO COLLECTION PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVEN MEISEL IN VOGUE, MARCH 1993.

This month Hamish Bowles writes about the experience of being swept away by John's beautiful, phantasmagoric production, by the characters he created, his sly use of film and music, and the world he wrought out of clothes. John has done this so many times before, of course, with so many memorable shows, but what's striking to me is that he *keeps* doing it, keeps adding layers to his work, and challenging himself and us.

That challenge is felt by younger designers. One of them, Jonathan Anderson at Loewe, for example, wrote to me in awe immediately after John's couture hit the internet (and set it ablaze). Clearly, he is determined to push himself just as far as John has. Both Jonathan and John, and Andrew for that matter, are as receptive

to inspiration (Jonathan's recent lodestar is the work of the late American painter Albert York) as they are brave enough to *go for it* and see their ideas through. They're all connected for me. Jonathan will be an honorary chair at the opening of "Sleeping Beauties." His work is in Andrew's exhibition. So is John's. Their minds are not confined, and their fearlessness is plain to see.

Amalitar.



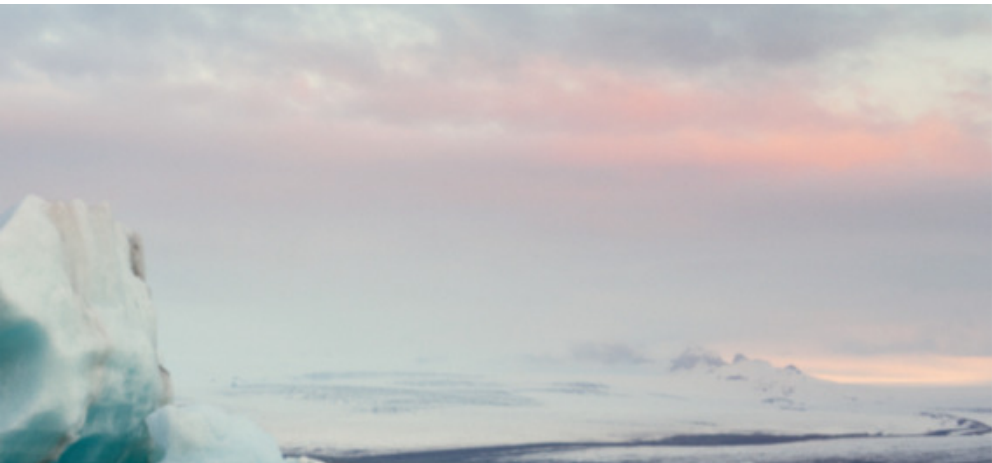
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Contributors



The Bees' Knees

In late January, “The Big Short” (page 166) sent photographer Colin Dodgson, contributing fashion editor Max Ortega, model Kendall Jenner, and some of the season’s shortest and sweetest looks to Los Angeles’s Kenneth Hahn park, up in the Baldwin Hills. There, in zippy separates from the likes of Max Mara, Hermès, and Chanel, Jenner frolicked in the grass, hugged a few trees, and played with a dog named Chico (belonging to producer Zachary Higginbottom). Also in on the fun were Ortega’s assistants, Minty Mellon and Conor Manning—both pictured above, with Dodgson at center—who dressed up as beekeepers. Their (very real!) gear? Courtesy of the Department of Agriculture.



A Fine Romance

Several key collaborations gave rise to “The Dreamlife of Zendaya” (page 126). Because the 27-year-old actor and producer covers both British *Vogue* and *Vogue US* this month (with a profile by *Vogue US*’s Marley Marius), she and her longtime stylist, Law Roach, worked with two photographers—Carlijn Jacobs for the British edition, Annie Leibovitz for this one—to create two very different shoots in Paris. While the first embraced a sporty, youthful aesthetic, with clothes from brands like Wales Bonner and Marni, the latter leaned into lush romanticism and couture. “A large percentage of [the looks] hadn’t even shown yet,” says Roach (at center, in white) of the US shoot. “So I was able to get dresses flown over by members of the ateliers and press teams.” Partnering with Leibovitz, he adds, was “an absolute dream. Annie’s such an icon. Everything I thought she would be, she was and more.”



Making Magic

To Hamish Bowles, John Galliano’s spring 2024 haute couture collection for Maison Margiela—shown beneath the Pont Alexandre III in Paris—joyfully recalled days of yore. As Bowles writes in “States of Wonder” (page 138), which runs alongside some truly bewitching images by Steven Meisel, even in the 1980s, as a student at Central Saint Martins, Galliano was wildly inventive, seizing on highly specific motifs from history and spinning them into fashion fantasies. In her own work, Pat McGrath, who devised the show’s porcelain-doll-inspired beauty look, did just the same thing: The models’ glassy painted skin, created with the aid of an airbrush machine, “gave me a version of AI artistry,” McGrath says, “and even better, because it was, in a way, done by human hands.”

TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX ORTEGA. TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY KATHRYN LEIBOVITZ. BOTTOM IMAGES: SAMANTHA SUSSMAN.



CHANEL

A black and white photograph of Brad Pitt sitting at a table in a restaurant. He is wearing a dark sweater over a light-colored collared shirt. He is looking off to the right. In the background, another person is standing, and there are large windows with a grid pattern. The lighting is soft and indoor.

CHA

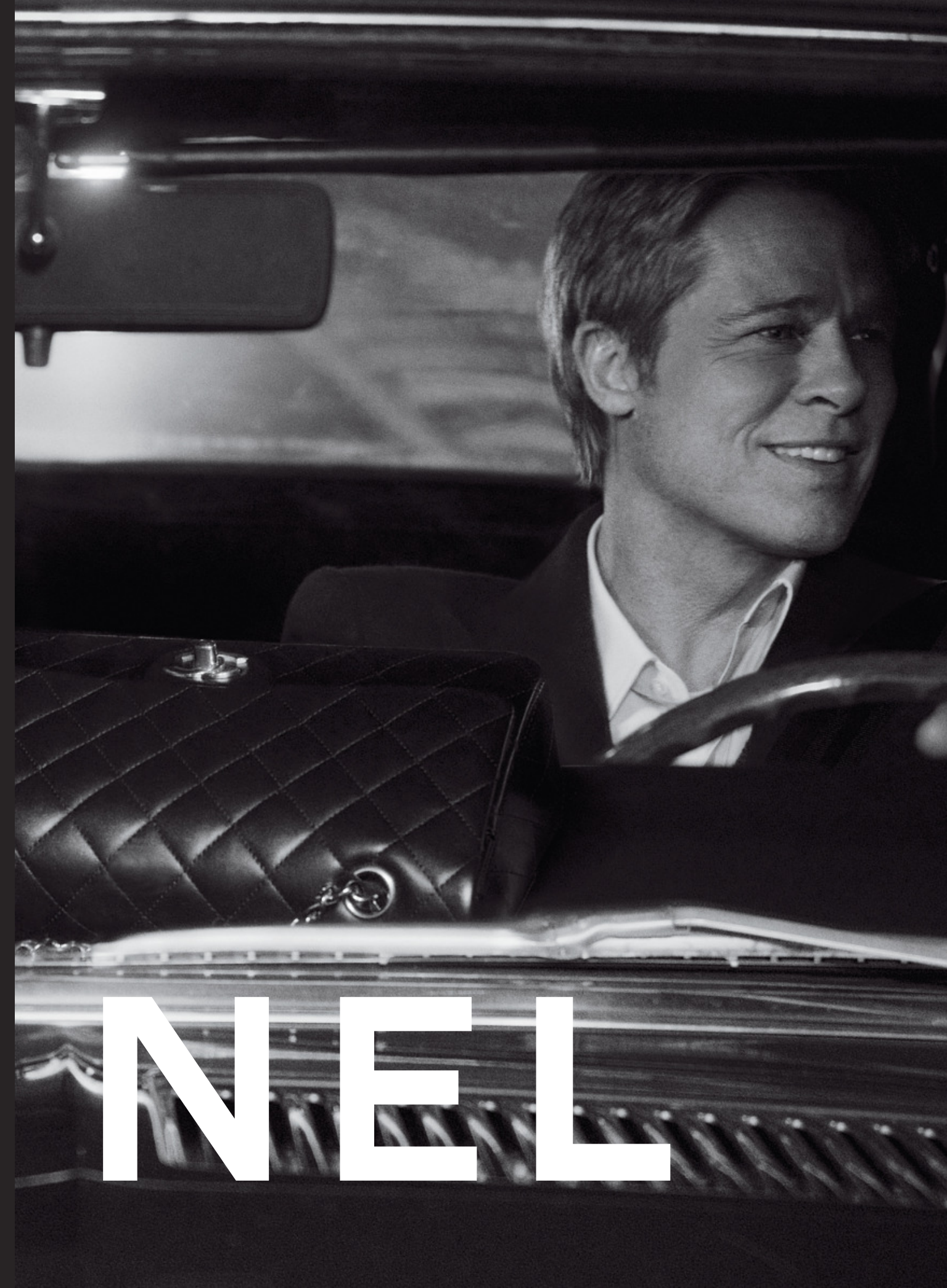


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LA BELLE ÉPOQUE

NEL



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NEL





SLEEPING BEAUTIES: REAWAKENING FASHION



GARDEN STATE

The Costume Institute exhibition incorporates scent, sound, video, and AI-assisted interaction—all centered largely around the natural world.
The Old Gateway by Thomas Edwin Mostyn (1864–1930).

“A piece of clothing isn’t something to just hang on a hanger or put on a mannequin,” says the photographer Nick Knight, who collaborated with Andrew Bolton, curator in charge of The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute, on this groundbreaking new exhibition. “We have dreams in it and live our lives through it.” “Sleeping Beauties” uses next-gen technology to reawaken and animate masterpieces from the museum’s permanent collection—many of them very rarely seen before. In the pages that follow, a few friends pay tribute to their own icons.





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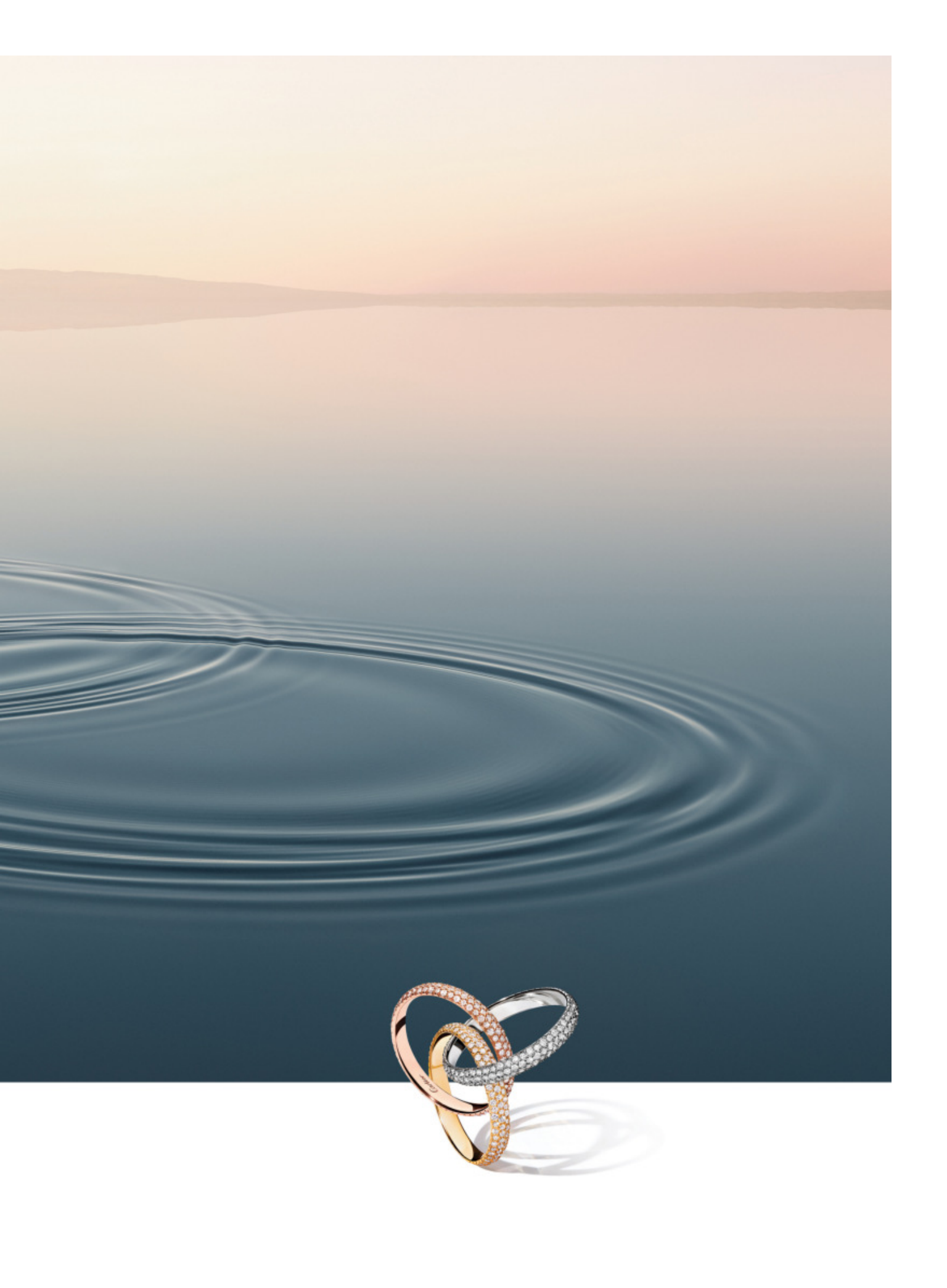


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IN THE PINK

FROM TOP:
Seersucker and pastel prints reign in Maine in 2004; Yasmin Le Bon plays a sweater set in 1990; Adut Akech buttons up in *Vogue*, 2023.

Prep School

Back in the '90s, Plum Sykes arrived in New York from London and promptly found herself in the thrall of preppy chic. Now, she writes, it's all coming back.

My love affair with preppy style began with a sweater—a pistachio green, cable-knit, three-ply cashmere Ralph Lauren crewneck, to be exact. It had exquisite proportions—a skinny, slightly cropped cut, tiny armholes, and narrow sleeves that made your arms look like they went on forever—and the wool was so soft that it felt like a baby's hair when you touched it (which I did a lot, obviously). In my New York of the late '90s, it became part of my work uniform: I would wear it to the *Vogue* office on Madison Avenue with a pair of pale pink silk Dolce & Gabbana flared trousers, my granny's pearls, and Manolo Blahnik kitten heel sandals in pale suede. On my shoulder: a huge leopard-print Fendi sack that André Leon Talley had given me. (It was quite normal for André to throw a heavenly bag on your desk and say something like, "You need it more than me, darling!" before pirouetting out of sight.)

Soon, I'd added a chocolate brown version of the Ralph sweater to my collection (the "collection" forever remained at a modest two), which I teamed with another pair of Dolce trousers (this time in lime green silk), snake-print shoes, and an L.L.Bean tote



monogrammed with my initials in pink letters. Beauty-wise, the Bobbi Brown "no makeup" makeup look reigned (think: an immaculate nude mani-pedi, a subtle stain on the lips, a dash of mascara, and a light tan courtesy of a weekend in the Hamptons).

So began my induction to the world of preppy style—a kind of studiously casual way of dressing that can be traced back to the early-20th-century sports uniforms of East Coast college preparatory schools. While those students rowed and played lacrosse, polo, and tennis, elements of their kit were fast becoming part of an emerging scene that dominated first Upper East Side hangouts like J.G. Melon and then the runways, centering around

polo shirts, boat shoes, tweed jackets, and sailing tops that suggested a certain outdoorsy lifestyle. The fact that it began to infiltrate our city wardrobes was largely due to the girls of the moment.

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FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVEN WEISEL, *VOGUE*, SEPTEMBER 2004. PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTHUR ELGORT, *VOGUE*, DECEMBER 1990. PHOTOGRAPHED BY SEAN THOMAS, *VOGUE*, MARCH 2023.



VERSACE
BRIGHT CRYSTAL



MACY'S DILLARD'S NORDSTROM BLOOMINGDALE'S

I had arrived in New York in 1997, when the rule of Park Avenue princesses was at its height and their influence within my circle was pervasive: We all wanted to look like Marie-Chantal Miller; her sisters, Alex and Pia; Aerin Lauder; and Tory Burch, who were all in their late 20s and dominated the social and fashion scenes, having evolved a polished, high-maintenance version of Manhattan prep. By day, they dressed in biscuit-colored Marc Jacobs waffle cashmere sweaters, capri pants, and Chanel ballet flats and wore large diamond studs in their ears; by night, for benefits and parties, they were clad in frilled Valentino, Chanel, or Oscar de la Renta cocktail dresses and bedecked in Harry Winston, Verdura, and Van Cleef jewelry; they got married in strapless Vera Wang confections and honeymooned in Maine or at the Mill Reef Club in Antigua. Social gatherings looked like film stills from Whit Stillman's *Metropolitan* (1990) and *The Last Days of Disco* (1998), the latter of which featured Chloë Sevigny in a gorgeous array of preppy party outfits.

My inner prep excelled during summer weekends. From early May to the end of September, I'd disappear to the Hamptons on a Friday afternoon and come back to a sweltering Manhattan as late as possible on a Sunday night. Through an English couple who were friends from my London days, I managed to swing a room in a heavenly clapboard cottage in Amagansett, which I shared with my twin sister, Lucy, who was a fashion editor at a different magazine. (A whole room just for me was too expensive.) The other friends sharing in the rental were Charles Fagan, who was a top executive at Ralph Lauren, and Thom Browne, then a designer at Club Monaco. Paddy Byng, one half of the English couple, also worked for Ralph Lauren.

For a wannabe prepster like me, Paddy, Charles, and Thom were the dream housemates. Charles exclusively dressed in Ralph Lauren and would emerge for breakfast looking like he was ready for sailing in navy cotton trousers with the cuffs rolled up, deck shoes, and a polo shirt with a Fair Isle vest over it. Paddy, ever the upper-class Englishman, dressed with nonchalant elegance in jeans, crisp shirts, and crewneck sweaters. Thom, already evolving his immaculate personal style, looked like he was about to hit Centre Court at Wimbledon and would sip his coffee sporting a neat cardigan, tiny shorts, and white sneakers.

Lucy and I, having visited J.Crew or Club Monaco, where you could pick up the full preppy weekend look for a couple hundred dollars, would join them on the lawn for a lazy breakfast dressed in faded denim mini-skirts worn with oversized cotton sweaters in a Pantone of

creams; Lilly Pulitzer-inspired shift dresses, which went brilliantly with our Fendi Baguettes; slim-cut jeans and plain white T-shirts from James Perse; all finished with a neat Gucci web belt in the famous green-and-red stripe. We also wore cashmere twin sets in electric yellows, blues, and greens with A-line Prada skirts, a subversive take on what our grannies had worn in the 1950s. The clothes were our passport to daytime activities that included early morning walks on the beach, cycling to the Amagansett farmers market, popping into the Golden Pear for coffee in East Hampton, brunching at the Candy Kitchen in "Bridge" (Bridgehampton), and rifling through the piles of fabulous jeans at the Henry Lehr boutique. Most favorite of all, though, was a shopping moment at J.Crew At-the-Beach, the chic outpost in East Hampton, which sold a range of printed T-shirts (not available in their

city stores) that were washed and washed to look as if they'd already been worn for years. In the evenings we'd join friends for clambakes by the ocean or lobster rolls in Montauk and end up back at the house, where we'd chat late into the night.

Perhaps, then, as we collectively pine for a blissful offline summer break, it isn't so surprising that this fresh-air wardrobe of seasonal hijinks is back for 2024. It was exquisitely executed on the Miu Miu runway, where navy polo shirts, worn over manish cotton shirts, look brand-new again; tiny shorts with drawstring waists evoke Nantucket or Cornwall summers; and huge, squishy bags bulging with rope sandals and distressed white deck shoes are the kind of must-haves that have fashion TikTok ticking madly. (Even the word itself is back—sort of: For the middle school crowd of the moment, "preppy" means less subdued sporty chic, more Regina

George in *Mean Girls*.) It's a refreshing antidote—undone, messy, and cool in an utterly unlikely way—to the trends that now seem tired: overly studied "quiet luxury" (snooze) and the glitzier trappings of Y2K fashion. Consider it an opportunity to get creative within the bounds of your budget, just like we did when packing for those long Hamptons weekends. Slide on a pair of vintage Tory Burch flats, knot a Ralph Lauren cable-knit cashmere sweater about your neck, have a tailor retool last year's jeans into a no-nonsense slim leg, and slide a copy of *The Official Preppy Handbook* (published in 1980) into your weekender. My advice, from one wannabe prepster to another: Always bear in mind that rules are there to be broken. □

Wives Like Us by Plum Sykes (HarperCollins) is published on May 14.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

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Not Black and White

At just 27, Anna Park has made a major impression on the art world. Dodie Kazanjian visits her studio.

As a very young South Korean-born girl growing up in Utah, Anna Park fell deeply and permanently in love with drawing. “I just found it very seductive,” she tells me. “It made me feel good.” She still feels that way. Her fluent, immersive, black-and-white images, often 10 feet long, have put her in the forefront of a cohort of Asian artists who are attracting attention from curators and collectors. Her drawings have the power and presence of oil paintings but are made from charcoal or India ink. Many of them feature the smiling, perfect young women in mid-century ads, comics, or movies, but they’re clearly not as dopey as they seem. The result is a whirlwind of abstract and figurative elements that evoke the anxieties and absurdities of popular culture in America through the eyes of someone who knows what it’s like to be on the outside looking in.

When I visit Park this past winter, her ground-floor Brooklyn studio is chock-full of works in progress for a show at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, in Perth. (It opens on April 20.) Park is tall and striking in her black



sweater and pants, with exaggerated and expertly drawn black eyeliner and tattoos on her arms and back—a tiger, a naked lady, a foot-wide lotus, a mandala, the Roman numerals for 27, her lucky number and, as it happens, her current age. Also, an impressively coiled snake, a memento of her teenage breakup with a boyfriend.

I notice that many of the large new works in her studio include prominent text—“My pleasure!,” “Good Girl,” “Just Imagine!,” “Dangerous,” “Look, look.” It’s the first time she’s used words in her images, and there’s more than a nod to Roy Lichtenstein and Ed Ruscha—the catalog to Ruscha’s recent retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art is open on a table. “I was almost afraid to put text in my work before, because it can tend to be aggressive,” she explains. “But I feel that language is as malleable as images are, and I thought it would be interesting to play with the double entendre for certain words. It’s all about tone—the tone in which something is delivered can alter its sincerity.”

She continues, “Whenever I see large billboards of these perfectly rendered, idealized women on the side of a building, they’re all so happy or super sexy. Makeup and eyebrows and hair so kempt and curated. I wanted to make her expression at least be something more like, ‘What the fuck is going on?’” she says of her drawing *Look, look*. Her women’s expressions are sardonic, humorous, perplexed, or even slightly bilious, and all of them are versions of herself. >78

ATTENTION, PLEASE

TOP: Anna Park’s *Look, look.*, 2024, is part of a new series of drawings involving text. LEFT: Park, photographed by David Brandon Geeting.

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I also notice some intriguing source material pinned on the studio walls: an ad for a movie called *Hell Baby*; another featuring a small fish on a hook, hanging between two bare female legs. “It’s a French ad for tampons,” she says. Park’s pictures are “cheeky,” as she describes them. “Maybe I’m just a cheeky person, a little cornball. But it’s nice to have a layer of humor.” In an earlier picture titled *First Marriage*, the bride’s breasts escape from her bodice, and the groom is largely pushed out of sight. “From the moment I met Anna, I was taken aback by how kind, smart, hilarious, and effortlessly cool she is,” says the painter Anna Weyant, who was in an early group show with Park. “When I see her work, I often imagine someone laughing at a funeral.” The women in her drawings, writes Rachel Cieřla, the curator for her Perth show, are “strong female leads who might exude the confidence of Kylie Jenner or the tough charisma of Tura Satana. Mysterious and irreducible, they evoke an attitude of ‘Don’t mess with me’ but also ‘Please see me and love me.’”

“Wonder Women,” a 2022 group show of 40 Asian artists at Jeffrey Deitch’s galleries in New York and Los Angeles, did just that. Park’s work was one of the standouts. “It is always thrilling to see the work of an emerging artist with astonishing drawing skill,” Deitch says. “Anna is part of a dynamic community of young Asian women artists living and working in Brooklyn, a group that includes Sasha Gordon, Dominique Fung, and Amanda Ba. The emergence of these ‘wonder women’ is one of the most exciting developments in contemporary art.”

Over breakfast at E.A.T. on Madison Avenue, Park tells me her origin story. She was born in Daegu, in the southern part of South Korea, where both her parents were pharmacists. In 2001, when she was around four, her mother, Kyoungmi Jo, took her and her older brother to New Zealand. Their father stayed behind. “My mom was unconventional and adventurous,” she says. “She wanted us to learn English, but I think she also felt very trapped in Korea. The Korean school system is so intense, even from a young age. My mom wanted us, and herself, to experience something completely different, and I’m so grateful for that.” After two years, they came back to Korea, where Park started first grade, but by that time, her mother was already thinking about the United States. Within a couple of years, she moved with the two children and her husband to Redondo Beach, California. (Her parents divorced when Park was 16, but amicably.) Park spent a good deal of time watching the Disney Channel, cartoons, and movies like *Mean Girls*. “It was a big adjustment, and I learned quickly to pick up on people’s mannerisms,” Park says. They lived there

for almost a year, waiting for a pharmacist job to open up somewhere—that turned out to be Sandy, a largely white suburb of Salt Lake City, where Park finished elementary school and went to middle and high school. “I hated that people would gawk at the food I’d bring to school, my stiff black hair and Asian features, my insecurity with the language,” she says. “For so long, I really wanted to be just a blonde white girl.” One of the new works in her studio, *Picture That*, includes a cropped word, “blonde.” “It’s the perspective of my childhood self,” she

says, “which was trying to peer beyond the edge of this identity that I could never attain.”

Drawing was her main consolation and support: “I was known at school as that weird girl who likes to draw.” Park entered local art competitions, and after spotting one of her drawings at the mall, a man named Bruce Robertson called her mother. He ran an after-school art program, and Park started taking classes there when she was in the fifth grade. “He really took me under his wing,” she says. “I ended up going there every week.” This is where she started drawing with charcoal. “That’s how he taught everybody. It was very classical training, and he was very honest with me. He wasn’t sugarcoating anything. A lot of times I was just frus-

trated to tears because I wanted to be great at the thing I loved doing. He instilled the idea that you have to put in the hours to get where you want to go.”

When Park was 14, a family trip to New York opened new horizons. “We did all the quintessential New York things—double-decker bus tour, Statue of Liberty, *The Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Modern Art. I remember telling my mom, ‘I’m going to live here one day.’” When it was time for college, Park ended up at Pratt Institute in New York. “For the first time in my life, I felt like I wasn’t so different, that I just blended in,” she says. “I was high on life, and I felt comfortable with myself. It took me such a long time to get to the point where I was proud to be Korean.” She knew her mother worried that she might never be able to support herself as an artist, and she was very aware of not taking anything for granted. “I was like, I have to make something out of myself, to make it worthwhile for my mom to have sent me here.”

After two years of Pratt’s four-year program, though, Park dropped out. She loved the school because “it was so open to what I wanted to do, but I needed more structure.” She went directly to the New York Academy of Art, a private graduate art school in Tribeca. “It was a very traditional painting and drawing program, and maybe because of my roots with Bruce Robertson, this was where I wanted to go.” She didn’t have an



Anna Park, *First Marriage*, 2021.

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A Mother's Story

In a Broadway revival of Amy Herzog's play *Mary Jane*, Rachel McAdams finds uncommon grace in an account of parental struggle and pain. By Chloe Schama.

I didn't know it was going to be quite so...wet," says the playwright Amy Herzog as she arrives at a Brooklyn café, shaking a slushy mix of rain and snow out of her hat. Herzog, 45, has delicate but pointed features and a kind of immediate intensity and focus that she'll need to draw upon in the weeks ahead. This is the month her adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* opens, directed by her husband, Sam Gold, and starring her old college friend Jeremy Strong. And at nearly the same time, in a quick shift in tone and material, rehearsals begin on a Broadway revival of her play *Mary Jane*, with Rachel McAdams in the titular role.

I was pregnant when I first saw *Mary Jane* in 2017, at the New York Theater Workshop (NYTW), starring Carrie Coon, and was taken aback by the intensity of my emotions. How embarrassing, I thought, how hormonal. But when I read the play again this year (decidedly not pregnant), I was shaken all over again. *Mary Jane* tells the story of a mother confined in the first act to her Queens apartment and in the second to the hospital where her unwell toddler, Alex, is being treated for cerebral palsy among several other serious conditions, though he remains offstage. "It's extremely simple," Herzog says when I ask her why. "You just never put a two-and-a-half-year-old child onstage."

That distance also has the effect of making the play more about the mother than the child, specifically about Mary Jane's grace and resilience, and the community she builds around her—home health aides, other mothers at the hospital, doctors, visiting chaplains, all bolstered by Mary Jane's optimism and fundamental good cheer. Hers is an immensely difficult life: She lives in a state of suspended animation, long-term plans on hold, but also one of perpetual motion, never able to let her vigilance

waver. The circle around Mary Jane, all women from their 20s to their 60s, from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds, allows Herzog to probe varied manifestations of caregiving and duty. "I'm wary of having written a play about a Madonna who's defining femininity as motherhood," Herzog says. She was reading the memoir of social activist turned nun Dorothy Day before she wrote *Mary Jane*, she tells me, and she wanted to evoke, as she puts it, "how women live so many lives in their one life."

A few days later, I meet the woman who will embody this rich role, Rachel McAdams. I had been asked to arrange the meeting at a quite specific Midtown restaurant—it turns out I have caught the actor just before an apartment viewing around the corner. She is in New York with her partner, screenwriter Jamie Linden, scoping out housing that she might move into a few weeks later, when she transplants her two small children, ages three and six, from where they live now (outside a large southern city that the very private McAdams does not want to name). She's less concerned about schools at the moment—"going from country living to New York living will be an education," she says—than the choice of neighborhood. The crosstown traffic and throngs of pedestrians seem a lot for the 45-year-old, who has built a quiet life out of the spotlight, in a house across the street from her sister, her kids attending a local Montessori school and running over to play with their cousins whenever they feel like it. But now the family is ready for an adventure. "Every time I meet a stranger on this street, >88

STAGE CALL

"This play grabbed me. It just got its hooks in me," says McAdams. Alexander McQueen dress. Fashion Editor: Max Ortega. Photographed by Norman Jean Roy.







I'm like, 'Where do *you* think I should live?'" she says, laughing.

McAdams has a warm and inviting demeanor, her beauty somehow surreptitious, more and more striking as you spend time with her. She has none of the hard edges and gum-cracking ferocity of Regina George in 2004's *Mean Girls*—McAdams's breakout role—nor the gauzy sentimental romanticism of Allie Hamilton in *The Notebook* (also 2004). Instead, McAdams gives off softness and earned wisdom, akin to what she brought to her role in *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, the lauded Judy Blume film adaptation from last spring. "The incredible thing about Rachel," says its director, Kelly Fremon Craig, "is how much she can transform. She has played so many different roles, but the common thread, the DNA of all of them, is that you feel her heart. It comes up from the soles of her feet."

Mary Jane marks a departure for McAdams—her first play in 25 years. "I started in theater as a kid. I did theater camp with my sister, and then I became a counselor and sort of grew up with this theater company," she tells me. This was in the Canadian town of London, halfway between Toronto and Detroit, where her father was a mover, her mother a nurse. She acted through high school and attended the conservancy program at York University in Toronto, studying drama. Theater is a deep-seated love, and she's been looking for a way to return to it. "I would read something every so often and think, Oh, I'm not

PREP WORK

Polo Ralph Lauren cardigan.
Tory Burch skirt. In this story: hair,
Bob Recine; makeup, Kayleen
McAdams. Details, see In This Issue.

quite right for this, or this isn't a great time to do this. But this play grabbed me. It just got its hooks in me."

Herzog and Anne Kauffman, who directed *Mary Jane*'s first outing at the Yale Repertory Theatre, then the NYTW version, and will be bringing it to Broadway, scheduled a Zoom call with McAdams once she'd read the script. The critical thing, they knew, would be finding someone who could encapsulate the main character's optimism amid hardship. "It's a very specific disposition—and that's the trap: to try to find a naturally positive dramatic actor who can illuminate that sensibility," says Kauffman. "There were some actors who read it and loved it, but they felt they couldn't deal with the darkness of it, as mothers." A weekend with McAdams at her home followed, where the New Yorkers ate food cooked by McAdams and Linden and drove around the neighborhood in the family golf carts. "When we were hanging out, I felt like she was a mother and a sister and a friend who just happens to act," says Kauffman.

McAdams quickly began preparing, working with a movement coach and a voice coach so that she would be able to deliver Herzog's long lines without sounding out of breath. ("My kids are wondering, 'What's Mommy doing in the basement blowing through those

funny straws?'"") But she has also been making real-world connections with other parents to gain insight into what someone in Mary Jane's position might go through. That exposure opened her up to the lived reality of parents caring for sick children. "You are suddenly part of a completely different world," she says. That world can be very full, but "it can also be very cut off."

Weeks before I meet Herzog, I spent a week in the hospital with my own son; he was sent there with encephalitis, or inflammation in the brain. It can be very serious, and in the first hours in the ER and the immediate days that followed, no one would promise anything. It was as though I had landed on another planet, and I kept thinking of the Lorrie Moore short story, "People Like That Are the Only People Here," in which the mother of a baby who is diagnosed, abruptly, with cancer narrates her rapid slide into another reality.

When I mention that story to Herzog, she tells me she considers it something of a "biblical text." Herzog has always written about her own life in one way or another. In her plays *After the Revolution* (2010) and *4000 Miles* (which earned her a Pulitzer nomination in 2013), she transformed her communist grandmother into a central character, even lifting her own words for lines of dialogue. But *Mary Jane* might be the most personal excavation yet. Herzog had a daughter who was born with profound health challenges, and that daughter died last year. "There were certain things that I read before having a sick child," she says, "and I knew I had to return to them." Herzog once met Moore at an event for the American Academy of Arts and Letters and made sure to tell her how deeply her short story had resonated with her. "It was almost as though I knew I was going to need it," she says.

In most ways, she adds, the specifics of *Mary Jane* "do not mirror my real-life experience at all." Great art, of course, does this: It compels through its specificity, but appeals through its universality. "There are elements of the play that will interest people who have gone through what the character in the play goes through,"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 184



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With Nail and I

Inspired by recent runways, Lena Dunham tries on inch-long talons and mere tip-skimming lengths, and wonders: What do our nails say about all we're asked to do?

My babysitter Noreen wore long acrylics in frosted pink that, to my five-year-old self, were the epitome of glam. I loved to watch her hands as she fried a grilled cheese, finger-combed watermelon-scented mousse through her bangs, or twisted the phone cord as she chatted to her boyfriend, Gene. Even when one broke and she had to hold it in place with a Band-Aid, I swooned at the impossibly adult *je ne sais quoi* of being a woman with nails to boot, imitating her by sticking strawberries on the ends of my fingers or forming my own with red Silly Putty.

Meanwhile, my mother and her friends were clean girls before there was a name for the aesthetic. As artists in the male-dominated '80s, they were wearing loose-fitting suiting by Comme des Garçons and cutting their nails to the quick, partially for practicality (they were wielding paintbrushes and cameras, sculpting and performing) and also to prove that their femininity didn't prevent them from playing in the big leagues—a stigma that culturally we've at least pretended to abandon. But, as always, it takes work to look effortless—my mother had her nails buffed and painted with a clear lacquer every other week, a process I watched like a hawk, often grabbing pinks and purples and begging her to give them a try. The closest she came was classic red for special occasions. Meanwhile, I collected Wet n Wild polishes and lined them up on my windowsill like I was the proud owner of a rainbow itself.

In high school in Brooklyn, long nails festooned with sunsets or airbrushed with the heavy tracks of monster trucks, screaming CAUTION against yellow paint, became an accessory as coveted as nameplate earrings and

Timberland boots. (Like so many good things, nail art was co-opted from the hip-hop looks of people like Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown that began influencing us all in the early aughts and still do today. Throw in the kawaii nail art of Japan, and rough it up with runway-ready piercings and gems, and you had decades of trends.) My mother found acrylics “too mature” and made a highly specific rule that I could wear any nail color I wanted as long as it didn't read as adult—baby blues, electric greens but absolutely no red, no coral, not even a pink. Through my 20s I continued to associate bright nails with personal expression, and was an early adopter of nail art salons like New York's Valley Nails and Vanity Projects, where I'd watch with jealousy as the burlesque dancer in the seat beside me applied inch-long tips studded with faux rubies.

But once I reached my 30s, a combination of maturity, practicality, and the fatigue that comes with increased responsibility meant that the closest I came to turning a look was a few coats of polish on a special occasion—the rest of the time, it was a quick clip when they started to look ragged, stained with watercolor and pen, uneven, and stress-bitten.

But when the writers strike hit this past summer, suddenly I had oodles of time stretching ahead of me, nowhere to be and no time to be there. The last time I'd felt that way was long before I started my career, when I'd spend high school afternoons in the drug store testing colors on my thumb or a lazy Saturday in my >102

LACQUERED LADY

Caroline Zurmely's *Hand IV*, a work painted entirely with nail polish.



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earliest 20s requesting the technicians at Valley replicate everything from my dog's face to oozing slime. Even when I went to Japan, a mecca of nail art, it was to shoot an episode of *Girls* and I was too rushed to decorate every finger, simply getting one of my tattoos re-created on my thumbs (although I did come home with boxes and boxes of press-ons, including a set that depicted smiling cups of pudding dancing on thumb and forefinger).

And so came my summer of nails, the longer the better, inspired by Zoë Kravitz's Catwoman, by early Lana Del Rey videos back when she called herself the "gangsta Nancy Sinatra," by Lil' Kim matching her nails to her pasties. I studied nail shapes (coffin? Who knew) and started a Pinterest, enjoying—in no particular order—'70s chevrons, a medieval harlequin pattern, ditzzy florals, red glitter and black stilettos that looked like Morticia Addams was headed to a Berlin rave. It made every email I sent feel like an event and every book require a hand-selfie (helfie?). No matter your level of daily dress-up, your gender expression, or your age, there's nothing quite like a nail to make every point you make feel, well, pointed.

I loved every second of it. Yes, it required reading a surprisingly lengthy article about how to text with tips (pro move: Use the sides of your thumbs, like you're playing Nintendo), and I had to carry tweezers to remove my credit card from the ATM. (Pop-top seltzer cans? Out of the question.) But what I lost in efficiency, I more than made up for in the feeling of slinky glamour that my newly extended fingers gave me. (And as a girl with hands that resemble a bouquet of hot dogs, that's always a boost, self-love be damned.)

"You're texting like you're 98," my husband noted (though even he had to admit it was worth it for the back scratches)

But summer always fades to fall, and when our strike ended (hooray! We did it!) and it was time to head back to work, it became clear that my nails were going to be a hindrance when it came to everything from doing quick rewrites, to flipping through the pages of my binder on set, to leashing up the dogs quickly in the morning, to buttoning my jeans and lacing my sneakers (summer had been all nail-proof cotton dresses and old-school Adidas slides). And so off they came, revealing the kind of cracked nails you'd see in the "before" portion of an infomercial at 3 a.m. Paging Sally Hansen.

But when my *Vogue* editor approached me, suggesting I try a week as a clean girly (to quote the Gen Z'ers in my office) and a week as Miss Thang, I gladly accepted. After all, I was going to be manicured by none other than Michelle Class, who boasts clients such as Kate Moss (clean clean clean) and Lily Allen (no time for the short-nail trend, according to Michelle). The nail artist recently gave Allen a matte-gray coffin shape so long I would be forced to lie in bed all day. We would try an over-the-top moment of glamour, and then I would embrace the new desires of nail fetishists: Spring 2024 runways went for the viral "glazed doughnut" and "ballet-core" vibes (Christian Siriano, Sandy Liang), with Proenza Schouler showing a classic short crimson that still reads squeaky clean.

After rescheduling with Michelle because my dog had an asthma attack and I needed not to have my hands in a gel machine so I could work her nebulizer (an early omen that epic nails might not work for me), we made an appointment for a Friday afternoon. As Michelle worked away, I watched the feed of footage from set on two iPads and dictated my notes to a patient coworker, my hands shaking with the desire to get back to typing. My kitten begged for treats as my (other) dog coughed up grass. I could do nothing about any of it. I felt grateful I am not yet changing diapers as I tried to unwrap a sandwich to little success, filling a not-yet-finished nail with an unintended scoop of avocado. When my husband returned home and asked why I hadn't finished putting on the duvet cover, I simply held up my new almond-shaped gel tips—nude until just above the quick, with a tortoiseshell tip and an arc of gold—as explanation.

While these nails felt the best of any "falsies" I'd ever worn, light and natural, they were still precarious. They elicited *oohs* and *ahhs* from my colleagues, but consternation when it took me about 15 minutes longer than usual to rewrite the scenes for the day. Meanwhile, after three days of telling myself I would remember how to text with them on again (and three days of asking my husband to please do everything from pulling up my Spanx to telling my parents not to worry that I hadn't responded to the family group chat), I took to leaving voice notes instead, all of which started: "Sorry, but I have fake nails at the moment."

It wasn't that I'd been good at handling the nails over the summer and had now somehow forgotten, but rather that I'd enjoyed my summer of the nail as a distraction from a strike that lasted months longer than we'd hoped, as concern for colleagues and below-the-line workers mounted and free time turned to free-floating anxiety. The nails worked for carrying picket signs, reading books I'd kept in a pile by the bed all year, even painting murals on my walls (all the hobbies I adopted in place of my beloved day job). On those lazy days, I could take my routine slow, devising cunning tricks for doling out pet food from vacuum-sealed packages, washing dishes like I was more breakable than the plates (nothing like a broken nail to remind you of our essential human fallibility). But by the end of a week with Michelle's mob-wife look, I had to admit—sadly, because I felt like a pop star *and* criminal mastermind all at the same time—that it was clean-girl time.

Hours before I was due to attend a film premiere, a lovely nail technician (who was as impressed by Michelle's work as everyone, and felt it was almost a sacrilege taking a literal jackhammer to the nails) cut me back down to size, presenting me with so many impossible-to-distinguish nudes before applying OPI Bubble Bath. I felt my shoulders slump lower and my conviction that I could rob a bank without consequence disappear.

Luckily my stylist was there to talk sense back into me—my looks for the evening included a Simone Rocha tulle cocktail dress bedecked in delicate blue bows, whose matching gloves would have been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 185



WHEREVER, WHENEVER, HOWEVER.
IN YOUR ELEMENT.

Group Dynamics

New books consider the many ties that bind.

Kathleen Hanna may not be a household name within mainstream America, but for the past 30 years she has been a figurehead in what was once called the alternative music scene, first in the '90s as the frontwoman of Bikini Kill, the feminist punk band from Olympia, Washington, that coined the term *riot grrrl*; and later Le Tigre, an electronic pop band whose songs were danceable and politically driven. In her memoir, **Rebel Girl: My Life as a Feminist Punk (Ecco)**, Hanna offers short vignettes describing her difficult upbringing, the heady early days of her bands, and the swirl of other musicians who surrounded her. ("Smells Like Teen Spirit" was a phrase she wrote on Kurt Cobain's wall one night.) Together, the anecdotes capture the life of a young woman trying to navigate a sexist culture while simultaneously finding her creative voice. There is an equal sense that *Rebel Girl* was written as a sort of road map for a new generation to pick up their own instruments, and rock the world.

—LAIA GARCIA-FURTADO

Alina Grabowski's **Women and Children First (SJP Lit)** is a novel built from interlocking stories, each chapter told from the perspective of a different woman living in a down-at-the-heels coastal New England town. In less capable hands, such rapid shifts might have a disorienting effect, but the book spins an entrancing web, the stories channeling the spirit of Mary Gaitskill and subtly building to reveal more and more about the town's inhabitants. They include a teenage loner who has begun an affair with one of the teachers at her school; the PTA president, whose overbearing energies are an attempt to divert attention from the disarray in her own home; and the mother of a local teen

who has died an untimely death. The cause of that death is the nominal mystery of *Women and Children First*, but the book is more about the secrets we keep and the lies we tell to remain hidden from one another.—CHLOE SCHAMA

Teddy Wayne's **The Winner (Harper)** has an irresistible premise: A handsome, young-looking tennis teacher and recent law school graduate moves to an upscale, secluded settlement off the coast of Massachusetts where a handful of masters of the universe are waiting out the pandemic. He's been offered a guest cottage in exchange for making himself available for on-demand instruction. Tennis is only part of the deal, however. One of the more stir-crazy residents quickly seduces him, and he enters into a transactional but highly enjoyable relationship with this older woman, all while slowly falling for her daughter—and aiming to keep the two women ignorant of his awkward position between them. After a slew of novels that placed the pandemic front and center, it is a welcome relief to read something that treats it as fabric for the plot—constructing a page-turning story of sex, power, and money.—c.s.

Claire Messud has transformed three generations of her family's story into a tour de force in **This Strange Eventful History (W.W. Norton & Company)**. Spanning 70 years, this novel of tremendous scope and piercing intimacy—Messud's best since 2006's *The Emperor's Children*—begins in 1940 Algeria and traces the Cassar family, pieds-noirs displaced by Algerian independence, as they move across the world, stopping in France, Canada, Argentina, Australia, and the US. All around them are the upheavals of the 20th century, but though Messud is working on a grand canvas, her skill is in miniature. *History*

is dazzling in its fine-tuned character studies: François Cassar, striving and painfully dignified as he forges a middle-class life as an executive for a French steel corporation; François's spinster sister, stuck in a family apartment in Toulon, France, concealing the damage of lost love; François's Canadian wife, Barbara, who is as magnetic as she is resentful; their two daughters (one, an aspiring novelist, a stand-in for the author); and even more characters and family members, all beautifully realized. This is a pointillist novel, profound in its portrayal of strains, bonds, and heartbreak.—TAYLOR ANTRIM





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Partial to It

Gen Z'ers have deemed side parts hopelessly outdated, but new defenders see the appeal.

I recently had to renew my passport, and when I paged through it, there, staring back at me, was a picture of myself a decade younger—with a side part. What a shock! For the past several years I had been studiously parting my hair down the middle, shamed by TikTokers into believing the style was universally more flattering. Search the internet and you'll find thousands of #MiddlePartChallenge videos testing its supposedly superior aesthetics. Suddenly, we millennials were dating ourselves, and I didn't want to look old—who does? So down the middle I went, growing out my layers until I could wear two thick bunches of hair on either side of my face like Emma Stone's character in *Poor Things* or a Kardashian in a confessional video.

Lately, though, there is blessed evidence that the reign of the middle part may finally be over. At the Screen Actors Guild Awards in February, there were side parts aplenty, from Emily Blunt to Penélope Cruz to Da'Vine Joy Randolph. At recent spring collections—Hermès and Victoria Beckham—there were slicked-back no-nonsense styles, which were echoed at the fall '24 shows by the sleek and dramatic hair at Fendi, Tory Burch, and Max Mara. Even the fantastical windblown bouffants on the models at Marc Jacobs's fall '24 collection had a distinct slant.

"I've seen people asking for the side part now at the salon," says Tommy Buckett, a celebrity hairstylist at the Marie Robinson Salon, who can attest to the stranglehold of the middle. "These severe center parts immediately made you feel like you had a style." What is it about a middle part that makes it seem low-maintenance but also pulled together? Hair historian Rachael Gibson suspects the

association might be connected to ancient values of symmetry, which lend a straightforward appeal: Think Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. Side parts, on the other hand, have often been associated with moments of transgression and freedom. The first one appeared in the West with the arrival of the flapper in the 1920s, says Gibson: "The whole flapper movement is about going out, drinking, smoking, and being able to live your life without a chaperone. Hair dovetails in with that."

But hang on: Not everyone can change how they part their hair so easily. "I find hair patterns are very similar to your fingerprint, with waves that radiate out from the center," says Joey George, the stylist who created dramatic 1940s-style side parts for Willy Chavarria's spring collection, inspired by the zoot-suit-wearing pachucas of East Los Angeles. "It

THE CENTER CANNOT HOLD

From the flapper to the disco era, an off-center part has recurring charm.

falls the way it falls." Buckett, who has been side-parting the hair of his clients such as Elisabeth Moss and Maggie Gyllenhaal, agrees. If your hair has become too accustomed to a middle part, Buckett suggests parting it the way you want at night and sleeping with it in bobby pins or hair clips. Regardless of trends, Buckett adds that side parts tend to be more flattering. "No one's symmetrical. We all have an eye that is a little wider on one side than another, our ears are off," he says.

Convinced, I book my appointment with him that week. As his assistant combed my wet locks, she looked at me in the mirror. "Down the middle or to the side?" she asked. I felt a flicker of panic. The face reflected back at me was many things—older, yes—but also a little less concerned with what others thought of her. Hair grows. Parts move. What feels right today can feel wrong tomorrow. That's the freedom—and beauty—of fashion. "To the side," I answered.

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DOT CALM

Some next-gen aromatherapy and acupressure patches claim to foster a state of zen.

I'm a lifelong sticker enthusiast, from validating gold stars to satisfying scratch-and-sniffs. My children mock me, but Hello Kitty stickers still adorn my laptop and birthday cards, as evocative to me as a tube of Bonne Bell Lip Smackers. (When I saw that Olivia Rodrigo had decorated her face with clusters of stickers for the cover of her debut album, *Sour*, I felt a kind of spiritual affinity.) But lately, stickermania has extended well beyond those of us who harbor a nostalgia for decor that once covered the insides of our lockers or the bottoms of our skateboards.

The wellness-oriented stickers you're now likely to encounter are of two general varieties. There are the kinds designed to stimulate pressure points (those handy aids for my cross-country trip). Ear seeding (which gets its name from the *Vaccaria* seeds used by practitioners in traditional Chinese medicine) is "like taking your acupuncture on the go," says Gudrun Snyder, founder of Moon Rabbit Acupuncture in Chicago. Laura Sniper, a doctor of acupuncture at WTHN, often sends clients home with a set to prolong the effects: "They're working in the background," she says, "while you're living your life."

And then there are transdermal patches that purport to deliver nutrients or other forms of sustenance (say, aromatherapy) by being affixed to the skin. Previously used to provide medicine or help people kick nicotine addiction, the new generation of patches addresses concerns ranging from stress, pain, and menstrual bloating to dry skin and jet lag. Ideally, permeable patch ingredients "have the ability to pass through the epidermis, be absorbed by the blood vessels, and enter the circulation," says Hadley King, MD, a dermatologist in New York City. (That's an appealing prospect given that oral supplements can sometimes cause gastrointestinal side effects.)

Both varieties are poised for an expansion. WTHN recently received \$5 million in funding, and Meghan Markle went viral last year for wearing a blue, disc-shaped anti-stress wrist patch from the company NuCalm, which claims to activate an acupressure point (on the left wrist) that brings about relaxation. (The company reported a "major spike" in sales in the aftermath.) In January, London-based acupuncturist Ross J. Barr, who has treated Markle and Prince Harry, released his Patch Pack for the first time in the US through Violet Grey (\$60 for 25). The aromatherapy adhesives—individual patches are designated for "calm" or "sleep"—quickly sold out. When Claridge's put his patches in its minibars, Barr says, they were outsold only by bottled water.

Though inherently temporary, stick-on treatments could shift the beauty and wellness world more permanently. Cleo Davis-Urman founded her company, Barrière, in 2020 to produce stylish medical-grade face masks, but expanded to vitamins. (The company's motto: "Wear your vitamins. Feel better.") In 2022, she was diagnosed as dangerously deficient in iron and B₁₂. With Davis-Urman's body >114

Stuck on You

Once applied primarily to adolescent totems, stickers—for wellness!—are growing up. By Michelle Ruiz.

When the plane lurched violently in the middle of a cross-country flight, I clutched the armrest with one hand. With the other, I reached for my ear. Days earlier, wielding an oversized pair of tweezers, an acupuncturist at New York City's WTHN clinic had affixed a constellation of tiny crystals to my outer ear. In a quiet, dimly lit room I felt a pleasing sensation when the crystals—each about the size of a large stud—were pressed against my skin. The seeds, as the crystals are called, are intended to stimulate the brain to send various signals to the body when positioned: There's a point near the inner flap to aid with digestion and another near the top for stress. Once secured, they evoke both the edge of Maria Tash piercings and '90s star-shaped stick-on earrings. Midair, in heavy turbulence, however, pressing them serves a single purpose: calming me over the Rocky Mountains.



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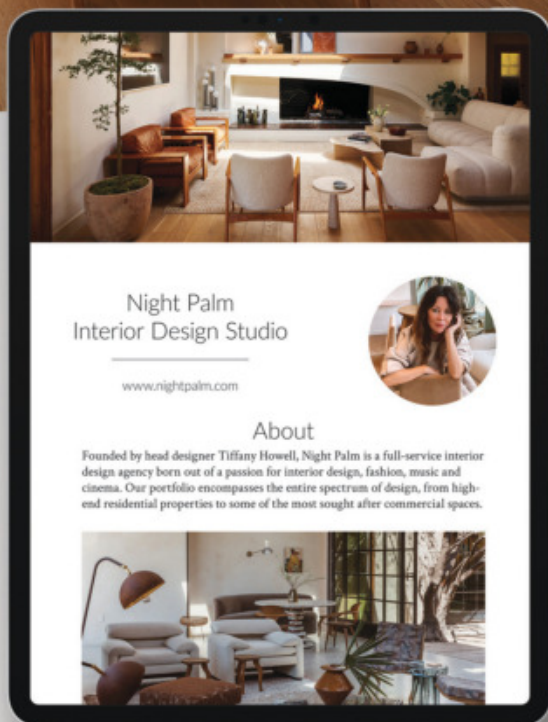
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failing to absorb capsule vitamins and insurance limiting coverage on injections and infusions, her doctor prescribed a patch, which she quickly discovered was too bulky to fit under clothes and only available in an unappealing shade of medical beige—“something that you would associate with being sick,” she says.

Her solution: an array of temporary-tattoo-like decals said to contain particle-size vitamins and supplements, designed to pass through the skin and tissue and into the bloodstream. Davis-Urman now gets her daily dose of iron and B₁₂ from bird or moon stickers—applied to any swath of clean, dry skin. Other stickers are geared toward skin health with ingredients like biotin and milk thistle, while a sheet of “travel well” seashells purports to ease anxiety and inflammation with herbal ashwagandha—“nature’s Xanax,” Davis-Urman calls it. I wear one of the travel well patches on my wrist before boarding my turbulent flight, and despite the traffic, work jitters, and exhaustion, I just might feel uncharacteristically easygoing.

Patch wellness is an emerging frontier, and, as such, data supporting its claims is limited. “They’re trendy, but more research is needed before we can assume that they’re effective,” says Jennifer Wider, MD. (She cites a small-scale 2019 study of bariatric surgery patients that found that those who wore multivitamin patches were more likely to be vitamin deficient than patients who took oral vitamins.) Wider is skeptical of the NuCalm disc’s product description—“promising way too much,” she says. And as King pointed out, the list of drugs that we know can be transmitted transdermally is “very limited.” Our skin is a strong barrier; only very small molecules, like nicotine, have been proven to be successfully absorbed via patch.

Barrière notes that its endorsement of herbal supplements like echinacea or ashwagandha has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration, which regulates vitamins and supplements according to a different set of rules than those it applies to food—in many cases only evaluating products that have already hit the marketplace. (Barrière’s patches are produced in a UK facility registered with the British government’s main medical regulatory agency.) And the website for Barr’s patches includes disclaimers that they are “not a substitute for medicines or medical devices.” But, he tells skeptics, “things like aromatherapy have been around for thousands of years; nothing hangs around that long that doesn’t work.” For Snyder, it doesn’t matter if ear seeding or a placebo effect is responsible for a greater state of calm: “It means it’s doing something for you.”

There is a secondary effect to wearing our treatments on our skin: Call it self-care as self-expression—offering an opportunity to talk about anxiety, pain, or hormone concerns. “It’s a big cultural shift to destigmatize the fact that we all struggle with something,” says WTHN’s Sniper. Over dinner in LA, I show off my ear seeds to my two friends, and the conversation drifts into stress and therapy and various challenges we’re experiencing. We hadn’t seen one another in years, but the emotional distance between us quickly narrows, a fresh candor facilitated by my openly worn admission—that’s something I hope sticks. □



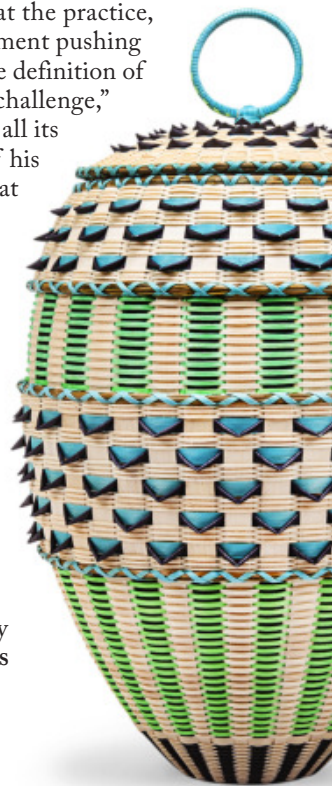
Interwoven Stories

Artist Jeremy Frey puts his own spin on a traditional art.

When Jeremy Frey was growing up on the Passamaquoddy Indian Township Reservation in Maine, he never expected his future to be defined by weaving. Though his grandparents had been weavers, the art had been in decline. It was only when a group of elders began holding classes, and his mother took one, that he began to gravitate toward the craft. In his early 20s he tried his hand at the practice, and now he’s at the forefront of a movement pushing it to new heights. “It’s a joy to expand the definition of Wabanaki basketmaking, but it’s also a challenge,” Frey notes. His trajectory can be seen in all its complexity in “Woven,” a retrospective of his work at the Portland Museum of Art that opens this month (and will travel to the Art Institute of Chicago this fall), and in a catalog from Rizzoli. The exhibition is a dazzling showcase of his ability to take unconventional materials—spruce roots, moose antlers, and dyed porcupine quills—and create objects of delicate, rhythmic delight. For Frey, these innovations are underpinned by tradition. “If my grandmother or grandfather were alive, or great-grandmother or great-grandfather, and they could see this boy from the reservation take traditional Passamaquoddy basketmaking and stretch it into the contemporary—I hope they would feel honored,” he says.—LIAM HESS

ALL IN ONE BASKET

ABOVE: A still from Jeremy Frey’s 2023 film, *Ash*. RIGHT: *Defensive*, 2022.



TOP: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST. © JEREMY FREY, CINEMATOGRAPHER: JOSHUA REIMAN. BOTTOM: JEREMY FREY, DEFENSIVE, 2022. ASH, SWEETGRASS, AND DYE, 12.5 X 7.5 X 7.5 INCHES. COLLECTION OF CAROLE KATZ, CALIFORNIA. © JEREMY FREY. IMAGE COURTESY ERIC STONER.



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If the Shoe Doesn't Fit

Forever looking for a 42 in a world of 39s.

I leaned against the department store counter, waiting for my mother to finish shopping, my gangly legs outstretched in that particularly teenage way. In the blink of an eye, she turned and then suddenly flew into the nearby underwear display, which was tiered like a wedding cake. Only after scores of lace garments rained down upon us did I realize what happened: I had tripped her. A mixture of embarrassment, laughter, and frustration emanated from my poor mom, still prone as she said: “You and those big feet.”

Puppies grow into their paws. For years growing up, my shoe size was the same as my age, and by the time I was 10, my footwear was scaring me. I finally found my groove in my late teens by leaning into the classics: Converse high-tops—in black, cream, red, and navy—became my signature shoes, and in my 20s I gravitated toward ballet flats and men's penny loafers, both of which were easy to find in my size and came in abundant colors and materials.

But what happens when you get a job at *Vogue* and need a pair of proper evening heels to work your first Met Gala? I experimented with European sizes and bought myself a pair of embellished size-40 Manolo Blahnik kitten heels at an editors sample sale—and I thought they were perfect. Over the years, I've also honed a careful array of styling choices, like sticking with low-profile silhouettes, choosing single-soles over any sort of platform, and employing sparkle and embellishment on darker colors rather than branching out into anything white, light, or neon-colored.

By 2022, though—while deeply immersed in preparations for the first post-pandemic Met Gala—I found myself in a quandary: After living in socks for almost two years, I could no longer squeeze my feet into my size 40s. I wasn't even a 41, it turned out. I was—I am—a true size 42.



Was I going through a late growth spurt—or was I simply refusing to put my poor feet through the paces anymore? And just how long had I been wearing the wrong size?

Serious shoes, of course, are small, wearable marvels of engineering, constructed on a particular last that corresponds to a specific size. When I was growing up, EU 40 and 41 (or US 10 and 11) were as big as women's shoes went. (Those with the opposite problem, meanwhile, generally struggled to find anything smaller than a 37, or a US 7.) It's simple economics: Engineering and producing shoes in outlier sizes just wasn't cost-effective.

Thankfully, however, in recent years—whether it's because women's feet are getting bigger, the industry is getting more inclusive, or people like me are just not having it with squeezing anymore—we've finally been seeing more options for the 41-plus club. It's a pretty fabulous club, if I do say so myself: In my near decade at *Vogue*,

we've sourced Chanel kitten heels for a first lady, and preordered Prada's 3D floral shoe of the season for an Academy Award-winning actress's cover shoot—and pulled a desperation pair of strappy Jimmy Choo sandals from a store when her Met look changed at the last minute. (Along with these labels, Manolo Blahnik is a go-to for size-inclusive shoes on both ends of the spectrum.) During the lead-up to the gala, I've taken to carrying a few pairs of my own 42s in my XL tote in case of an emergency call from a certain colleague or a fellow 41-plus friend (I'm looking at you, Chioma Nnadi and Paloma Elsesser).

Then again, maybe this whole embracing-big-feet thing is about more than just correct sizing. In the past year Balenciaga has made supersized sneakers—the Cargo—that make your feet look doubled in size, while Loewe released a puffy pump, the Comic, that looks like an exploded doll shoe (plus those MSCHF red boots making the rounds on TikTok). If there's a single word to describe the shoes as we come out of seeing the fall 2024 shows in New York, London, Milan, and Paris, it's *clodhopper*. But please: Don't tell my mom.—WILLOW LINDLEY

GIANT STEPS

These days, bigger shoe sizes aren't as elusive as they once were. The author gathers some options from Alaïa, Mansur Gavriel, and Proenza Schouler. Photographed by Hunter Abrams.

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A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a black long-sleeved top and wide-leg black trousers, stands in a store. She is holding a large, dark, textured leather bag with multiple straps and buckles. A dark denim jacket is draped over her shoulders. The background consists of black metal shelving units filled with various handbags, including bright green and silver ones. The floor is dark and reflective. The word "BALENCIAGA" is overlaid in large white letters.

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The Dreamlife of Zendaya

Up in fame's stratosphere, she considers what's next: more adult roles, like her new one in *Challengers*; a turn in the director's chair; a family one day.... Zendaya looks to the horizon with Marley Marius. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz.

It's an amazing, almost inspiring thing, what happens when Zendaya gets in front of a camera.

Before visiting the set of her British *Vogue* cover shoot in late January, I imagined her regarding the whole ordeal with gracious indifference. (The model in my mind was Ingrid Bergman at the 1975 Academy Awards, dryly telling the audience after her third career win that it was "always very nice to get an Oscar.") Zendaya has, after all, been working in Hollywood since she was 13; she's served as an ambassador for Louis Vuitton, Valentino, Tommy Hilfiger, Bulgari, and Lancôme; and, at 27, she's already won the Emmy for best lead actress in a drama *twice*. Surely, posing for a magazine would be, dare I say it, kind of boring to her by now? (Actually, *two* magazines: This month, she becomes one of the rare stars to cover British *Vogue* and *Vogue* US simultaneously.)

But at a nondescript studio space in Aubervilliers, a northern suburb of Paris, what I discover instead is a woman possessed. Endlessly leaping and twirling in youthful silhouettes

from Vuitton, Erdem, Marni, and Wales Bonner, Zendaya is, as they say, *giving*: face, movement, angles, *legs*. (Five foot ten in bare feet, she gets them from her mother, who stands a staggering six foot four.) From moment to moment, she morphs into Veruschka, Twiggy, Naomi, Linda. She even has Linda's hair: After appearing that morning in micro-bangs and pin-straight lengths for Schiaparelli's spring 2024 haute couture show at the Petit Palais, she now sports a swishy little pageboy cut. The cries of approval—from the British *Vogue* photographer, Carlijn Jacobs; from Zendaya's stylist (or "image architect," as he would have it), Law Roach; from her assistant-slash-hype man, Darnell ("You look beautiful!")—are breathless, in part because they can barely keep up.

The scene is mesmerizing, total magic...but it all seems pretty exhausting too. This is *work*, full stop. Pausing to cool down, she intently reviews her results, scrolling through Jacobs's images on a monitor. (Roach, hovering nearby in a bedazzled track-suit, waist-length braids, and a cream knit cap, leans over to confer with her, while Darnell—tall and finely

groomed, with big white teeth and thin, twisting locs—manages the playlist, bobbing along to "Hey Ya!" by OutKast.) At these junctures, Zendaya could be a scientist scrutinizing slides in a lab: Various identifying some strange shape she'd made with her neck, or determining that her hair should flip *this* way rather than *that*, she is dutiful, present, utterly precise. A pro, in other words.

Truthfully, I shouldn't have been so surprised. Zendaya had warned me about this, the kind of *creature* she turns into when she's having her picture taken. The day before the shoot, I am led by her friendly security guy, Paul, into a sprawling hotel suite high above the Place de la Concorde, dampened that morning by freezing rain. I settle in a room where, from a small terrace, the Dôme des Invalides and the Eiffel Tower are plainly visible to the south and southwest. Casting an eye for personal effects, I find nothing, only a balled-up plastic bag in one of the matching armchairs.

When, after 10 minutes or so, Zendaya sidles in to meet me, Darnell trailing behind her, she cuts a fairly different figure from the whirling dervish in Aubervilliers. Fresh-faced,

ON A CLOUD

Zendaya wears a custom dress, veil, necklace, and bouquet from Schiaparelli Haute Couture, designed by Daniel Roseberry.

Fashion Editor:
Law Roach.



with her naturally curly hair—lately an auburn-brown color—pulled back, she’s dressed in a dove gray cashmere pullover, pleated black trousers, black socks, and brown slippers, a yellow silk scarf slung about her neck and a silver watch hanging from her wrist. This is “Z” off-duty: cozy, quiet, immediately disarming. (She greets me, sweetly, with a hug.) Also jet-lagged—she’d arrived in Paris late the night before and been in fittings all day.

“She’s a different being that comes into me—my own Sasha Fierce,” she explains, referring to the alter ego famously assumed by one Beyoncé Knowles. (On set, she will briefly break her focus to trill along to “Heated” from *Renaissance*: “Yadda, yadda, yadda, bom, bom, kah, *kah!*”) “She takes over and *she* does the carpet.” The clothes, of course, play a role: For Zendaya, shoots and red carpets are like movie or television sets, in that they all demand commitment to a character. “I have to *buy* her,” she says. “I have to buy that this woman exists, or that this fantasy exists.”

The next month, on the globe-spanning press tour for Denis Villeneuve’s *Dune: Part Two*, that fantasy takes the form of a midriff-baring alien superstar, whether she’s in a Barbarella-worthy vintage chrome-and-plexiglass bodysuit from Thierry Mugler (for the premiere in London), a marvelously draped and knotted top and floor-length skirt by the ascendant young designer Torishéju Dumi (for a photo-call in Mexico City), or a long-sleeve Stéphane Rolland dress with a cutout stretching practically from her sternum to her kneecaps (for the premiere in New York). January’s Schiaparelli couture show couldn’t have been a more fitting precursor. (There, Zendaya donned a silk crepe turtleneck with knotted silk “spikes” and a silk faille column skirt—an *E.T.*-meets-*War Horse* situation that managed to look devastatingly cool.)

“What she allows me to do is to come up with the big story, the big idea, and she takes that and she whittles it down a bit,” Roach says when I reach him at home in Los Angeles. He and Zendaya have worked this way since she was 14 and promoting *Shake It Up*, the Disney Channel series that launched her career in 2010. She’d been switched on to



BACK TO IT

"Something about her felt very, *Oh, damn.*" Zendaya says of Tashi in *Challengers*, which opens in April. "I was kind of scared of her."
Giambattista Valli Haute Couture dress.



the power of playing dress-up early: During childhood summers when her mother, Claire Stoermer, picked up extra work as house manager of the California Shakespeare Theater, in Orinda, a seven- or eight-year-old Zendaya, who was raised in nearby Oakland, would watch the performances from the back of the house, burrito and Snapple in hand. Keen to allay her worrying shyness, Zendaya's parents, both teachers, soon had her in acting classes, learning scenes from *As You Like It* and *Richard III*. (She also joined a hip-hop dance group, Future Shock Oakland, the very cute proof of which is still on YouTube.) Regional productions of *Caroline, or Change* and *Once on This Island* followed.

By the time that she moved with her dad, Kazembe Ajamu Coleman, to Los Angeles for the Disney job, Zendaya knew what character, drama, and costume could do. Similarly, getting done up for a step-and-repeat “gave her this real confidence, like, Okay, let me put it all on and go out there and give this to the world, and then let me come home and take it all off and become myself again,” Roach says. “It’s so funny. People were like, ‘Oh, she’s so fierce.’ And, yeah, she is, on the inside. But she’d rather be at home, with her hair down and no makeup, with Noon, her dog, watching a movie, probably *Harry Potter*.” Zendaya doesn’t go much for partying. When she was in her early 20s and Roach would try to get her to go out—“I’m like, ‘Go crazy! This is the time you’re supposed to be in college!’”—he’d be swiftly rebuffed. “She’d be like, ‘If you don’t sit down and be quiet...’” he remembers with a laugh. “The funny thing about that little girl is that she has always been the same person.”

Nevertheless, as well-practiced as she is, Zendaya still finds it hard, turning *on*. “It is one of those things that I’m like, Oh, shit, I haven’t done this in a second,” she says of the shows and shoots on her schedule in Paris. The stakes have also changed in recent years: Somewhere between the first and second seasons of *Euphoria*, the HBO drama that won her those two Emmys, and the three *Spider-Man* movies she’s made with Tom Holland, her boyfriend of a few years, she became *Zendaya*—and in the public

imagination, if there’s one thing Zendaya does, it’s turn a look.

“When I was younger there was less pressure,” she says. But now, while she’s in town for the couture—and can’t exit a building without trending on X—Zendaya has little choice but to become *that girl* again. “I got to get into a zone of being that part of myself, which is definitely not a thousand percent natural,” she allows. “She gets rusty.”

To her 184 million-odd admirers—if Instagram is anything to go by—one of Zendaya’s greatest gifts is to seem both improbably perfect (so tall, so poised, so plugged into all the right things, from racial justice to voting rights) and somehow familiar, like the girl everyone got along with in high school. “I still have to sometimes try to not fangirl when

The perfect future:
“make things and pop
out when I need
to pop out, and have
a protected life
with my family, not
worried if I’m not
delivering something”

I’m around her,” says the 20-year-old actor Storm Reid, who plays her younger sister on *Euphoria*. The two first met over a decade ago, at a Ben & Jerry’s in Los Angeles, where Reid—then about nine—timidly asked for a picture. Within a few years they’d be singing Beyoncé songs together in Zendaya’s trailer. “She’s still one of my biggest inspirations, and I think she’s just so incredibly talented.”

Zendaya has channeled that alluring, unknowable, It-girl-next-door thing into a knack for playing good people with secrets: a teenage spy in *K.C. Undercover*; the charming but manipulative addict Rue in *Euphoria*; the acerbic introvert Michelle, a.k.a. MJ, in *Spider-Man: Homecoming*. (When she first auditioned for the latter part, in about 2016, “to be honest

with you, neither Kevin Feige nor I knew who she was,” says Amy Pascal, who has, with Feige, produced all of Zendaya’s *Spider-Man* films. “She was wearing no makeup and she was just dressed like a regular girl, and we were like, ‘Oh my God, she’s amazing. She *has* to be in the movie.’ And then we found out she was a totally famous person, and felt really stupid.”) She’s also been a sylphlike acrobat—introduced with the words “Who’s *that*?”—in *The Greatest Showman*, and, as Chani in *Dune*, a shimmering desert mirage turned love interest-slash-mentor-slash-skeptic of Timothée Chalamet’s messianic Paul Atreides.

But Zendaya’s character in *Challengers*—the long-anticipated sports drama from director Luca Guadagnino and writer Justin Kuritzkes, postponed from a fall 2023 release to this April by the SAG-AFTRA strike—is a different story. Tashi Duncan is very, very clear about who she is: As a teen, she’s a tennis star with the world on a string (read: a junior title, a cushy sponsorship deal, and a spot at Stanford); then, after a career-ending injury, she’s a fiercely competitive coach, angling to win her husband, Art Donaldson (Mike Faist), his first US Open. (Art himself is somewhat less committed to this goal.) But the spanner in the works is Patrick Zweig (Josh O’Connor), Art’s former best friend and Tashi’s ex-boyfriend, whom they run up against at a would-be low-stakes qualifying tournament in New York. As Art and Patrick face off across the court, their contest is, evidently, as much about proving themselves to Tashi as advancing to the Open.

Sent Kuritzkes’s script by Pascal, Zendaya remembers finding it “really, really strong and a little crazy.” She was also just bowled over by Tashi. “Typically, I play the person that ultimately is easier to empathize with,” she says. Tashi—who delights in pitting lifelong friends against each other, and using sex to addle and maneuver them both—was decidedly not that. (The film’s second trailer is set to the song “Maneater” by Nelly Furtado.) “There was something about her that felt very, *Oh, damn*,” Zendaya adds. “Even I was kind of scared of her.”

Incredibly, excepting 2021’s *Malcolm & Marie*—the spare, moody Netflix two-hander she made during

GO FOR MARIGOLD

Zendaya treated the rigorous tennis training for *Challengers* "like dance," she says. Dior Haute Couture dress and shoes.







WALL ART

Zendaya admits she can put too much pressure on herself. "Sometimes it's a bit crippling." Custom Louis Vuitton cape and dress.



BLUE MOOD

Loewe dress.
Bulgari High
Jewelry necklace.

ON HER TOES

She's been studying directors and how they work in the hopes of "not being afraid, and trying to do it myself." Fendi Couture dress.



lockdown with *Euphoria* creator Sam Levinson and John David Washington—*Challengers* marks Zendaya's first full-fledged, top-of-the-call-sheet, leading-lady turn in a movie. It also casts her, for once, as an actual adult: a *mom*, no less. Large swaths of the story are told in flashback, but at the match that serves as *Challengers*' main framing device, Tashi, Art, and Patrick are all in their early 30s. Was that...weird for her? She's been playing teenagers for about as long as she's been working. "I'm always in a high school somewhere," she says. "And, mind you, I never went to high school." So, to break away from that "was refreshing. And it was also kind of scary, because I was like, I hope people buy me as my own age, or maybe a little bit older, because I have friends that have kids, or are having kids."

She too would like to start a family one day—and is a doting aunt to her gaggle of younger nieces and nephews (she has five half siblings)—but Zendaya is, unmistakably, in no rush to get there. She recounts a recent conversation in which someone from a brand referred to an archival look as being 30 years old: "I was like, Wait, girl, this is from '96. Ain't no 30 years old just yet, okay? This is 27 years old. *Wait a minute.*"

As a producer on *Challengers*, Zendaya was involved in everything, from hiring Guadagnino to scouting locations (they shot in Boston and New York). Guadagnino, known for heady romantic dramas like *I Am Love* and *Call Me by Your Name*, appealed to Zendaya as a master of atmospherics. "It's the looks, it's the glances, it's the tension," she says of his work. "I feel he creates that visceral environment." (Does he ever: There's a scene involving Art, Patrick, and two cinnamon-sugar churros that, without being remotely indecent, could make your hair stand on end.) Guadagnino, for his part, "knew everything about her wonderful career," he tells me in an email, "and I always admired her."

Zendaya had her costars lined up in fairly short order: first O'Connor ("I was like, You know who would be great? The guy from *The Crown*"), then Faist, a revelation in Steven Spielberg's *West* CONTINUED ON PAGE 185

TULLE TIME

Dress from Jean Paul Gaultier Haute Couture by Simone Rocha. In this story: hair, Kim Kimble; makeup, Raoul Alexandre. Details, see In This Issue.



States of **WONDER**

John Galliano's recent Maison Margiela triumph was an haute couture tour de force. Yet, as Hamish Bowles recalls, it's but the latest in the designer's long history of era-defining shows. Photographed by Steven Meisel.



It was a sad, rain-tossed evening seemingly lit by candlelight and stars. When the cab arrived at John Galliano's Maison Margiela show in January at the Pont Alexandre III—the last of the couture for that week—hundreds of kids were waiting and screaming for their own stars. I made my way through the crowds before realizing that I would then have to navigate a series of rain-sodden steps to arrive to the Seine-side building hidden away beneath that magnificent Beaux Arts bridge. I had a stroke a little over a year ago, and I am not as confident with such steps as I once was, but I braved them bit by tentative bit—I had to—and clung on to the handrail for dear life. The archways of the riverside pont had been cleverly trompe l'oeil with a subtle 1930s look, revealing a battered and forlorn nightclub with some tables and chairs set outside (during the rainstorm they were protected from the pitter-pat hailing down beyond the bridge).

Inside was a seedy '30s club supported by robust arches of stone, with run-down floorboards leading to arrangements of billiard tables and Thonet chairs. The Galliano gang—at my gathering of tables sat Lila Grace Moss, Tish Weinstock, and

LEADING LIGHT

Model and actor Gwendoline Christie walks on water in silk-taffeta-mad, nip-waisted glory. Maison Margiela Artisanal designed by John Galliano throughout.

Fashion Editor: Olivier Rizzo.







NIGHT MOVES

FROM LEFT:
Models Leon Dame,
Colette Kanza,
Emeline Hoareau,
Lulu Tenney, Yilan
Hua, and Olga
Sherer conjure a
long-ago Parisian
demimonde.





the ravishing ballerina Francesca Hayward (I'd just seen her as a heartbreaking Manon Lescaut at the Royal Opera House)—had dressed the part in barely-there vestiges of lace and chiffon or sweeping trench coats. And we waited. And waited. I think an hour had gone by before Francesca, as punctual as any ballet star, wondered: Was it always like this?

I, however, was faintly trembling: So much had been put into this scene-setting that I felt the results might be...special. I didn't wait long to find out. On screens dotted throughout, a tale of the sea ended with its handsome crooner appearing before us, marching through the zigzag pathway and tossing his coat, revealing one hand that did not exist and a voice that was a dream. Those faint trembles were ricocheting through my body—and then they came: men with corsets as tight as can be, trousers deftly caught with basting stitches; women with skirts that owed something to Vionnet, bosoms proud, thighs expanded, and waists constricted as hell. This was a moment. Margiela, under John's exquisite hand, was seen to perfection everywhere—every piece of embroidery; every curve of satin in a corset; an ebony coat with a 1950s dazzle to it cinched-in midriff, more basting stitches defining the closure; another suit with black lace worn over a white foundation that pushed and pulled the body like a larger-than-life doll.

I thought of the first show I had seen of John's—his first show ever. He wasn't even meant to have one: He was at Saint Martins, preparing his degree submission for the summer of 1984, and had made a marvelous collection of drawings (John was a fashion-drawing student)—so good, in fact, that he had already secured a job in New York after graduation. John had taken to the library, where he built a barrier of sorts—old bound copies of *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*—high enough to deter onlookers and behind which he spun his dreams. His remarkable design tutor, Sheridan Barnett, saw what he was working on and insisted that he bring his drawings to life.

And that is how the fashion designer was born. Knowledge of advanced pattern-cutting was not John's forte, but a sense of bravura in the proportions was, and he got together quite a handsome team to make his dream happen. He was chosen to provide the Saint Martins finale, a high honor, and there was a real sense of—I don't know—something *spine-tingling* about to happen. The music, a mix of soul and “La Marseillaise,” started, and his ragtag

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Skin Like Glass

“A new skin that has never existed before” is what Pat McGrath imagined when she saw the vintage porcelain doll that John Galiano brought to her for beauty inspiration. After nearly 20 days of testing, McGrath's team flew to the Margiela offices to offer a first look at her new glass-skin technique and received a standing ovation. How the optical illusion—modeled here by Lulu Tenney—was achieved: On top of bleached brows and sheer pastel pigments, McGrath misted seven or eight coats of a concoction composed of various peel-off masks and water through an airbrush machine. (Including drying time between layers, each model took around 30 minutes in the makeup chair.) “It's almost like a shield—a force field of glass and light around you,” says McGrath. “It really looks like another world.”

In this story: hair, Duffy; makeup, Dame Pat McGrath. Details, see In This Issue.

The Costume
Institute's revelatory
new exhibition,
"Sleeping Beauties:
Reawakening Fashion,"
employs sight, touch,
smell, sound, and
technology to bring
rarely seen pieces
to life. Nathan Heller
gets the full picture.
Photographed
by Steven Meisel.

A Sense of Occasion

NESTED INTERESTS

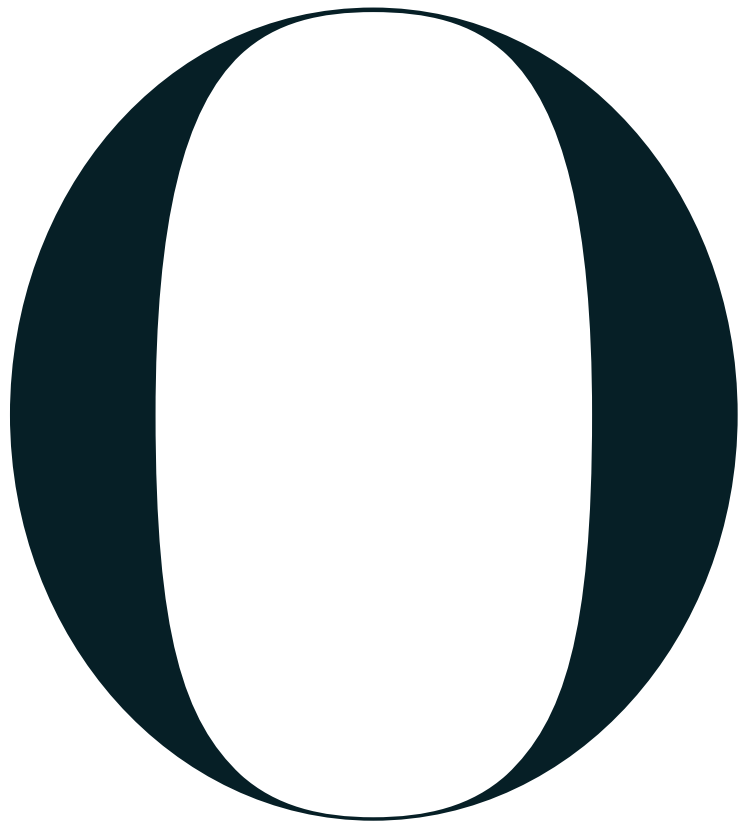
Elizabeth Debicki wears a dress from Marni's spring 2024 collection. In his invitation to the runway show, the house's creative director, Francesco Risso, described encountering a fragrance in Paris that he longed one day to smell again. "Sleeping Beauties" revels in such quests, recapturing the look, feel, sound, and even the scent of garments from The Met's collection.

Fashion Editor: Amanda Harlech.









On the avenue today before The Metropolitan Museum of Art, it is frosty, with a selection of clothing that reflects the weather—pedestrians are hastening by with scarves and tweed coats drawn to their chins. But soon the rush of passing garments will change. In the spring, when the trees of Central Park grow fragrant and the asphalt warms, people wearing dresses in soft fabrics will pass scatterings of tourists out on the museum steps. At the start of May, a red carpet will draw up the staircase, and guests dressed for the Met Gala will catch camera flashes on their way inside. By tradition, that will be high fashion's brightest moment, when an outfit and a personality bring each other most entirely to life. Then the attendees will enter the museum, where, most years, they would tour an exhibition of historic dresses whose wearers are long vanished, and whose fabrics are now frozen in place.

"It's something we always struggle with—that, once a garment comes into the museum, a lot of the sensorial experiences that we take for granted with clothing are lost," Andrew Bolton, the curator in charge at the Costume Institute, explains this morning, over tea, in a dimly lit conference room inside The Met. Photographs of more than 50 clothing items are pinned to the wall. "The positive part of it is that we're custodians of the clothing, here to take care of it in perpetuity," he goes on. "But that involves very specific conditions: You can't touch it, you can't smell it, it can't be worn. And you can't *hear* it."

For centuries, each of those qualities was considered not incidental to fashion but an integral part of its experience

BLOW, WINDS!

All the clothes photographed on Debicki for this story—including an organza Iris van Herpen couture dress from spring 2020, seen here with Femme LA shoes—were later acquired by the Costume Institute for the show, except where noted.



IN BLOOM

ABOVE: On Christian Dior's May dress from spring 1953, flowering grasses and wild clover are etched into organza. OPPOSITE: A splendid 2017 reimagining of the Junon dress from Christian Dior Haute Couture's fall 1949 collection (courtesy of Dior).

and design. Dresses were marketed in part by their sound, known as *scroop*: the sensuous rustle of fabrics against one another as the wearer crossed the room. Cloth buttons used to be constructed around bits of cotton wool to absorb and emanate drops of perfume. "If we're able to capture this information now," Bolton says, "it's a way of helping future generations appreciate how it was worn, what it looked like on the body, and how it moved."

"Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion," opening on May 10 and closing on September 2, is Bolton and the Costume Institute's bid to break beyond the limits of display and bring long-dormant garments back to life, reinventing on the way what a museum show can be. With a team of researchers and an array of technologies, the museum has extracted information about how historic pieces stimulated the senses and has devised ways to present this data. "The information is going to be there in perpetuity—not just in the exhibition but on our website forever," Bolton says.









MAGIC TOUCH

ABOVE: A mystical-seeming House of Worth cape from 1889. OPPOSITE: A fairy-tale-worthy Gucci cape and dress by Alessandro Michele for fall 2017.

The show is a landmark for the museum, in part because it frees The Met to turn back to its own collection with new eyes. There was no borrowing from other institutions to flesh out the displays, and although the Costume Institute made 75 new acquisitions for the show—from an exquisite Christian Dior petal dress and a magnificent Iris van Herpen draped garment, as delicate as moth wings, to a Philip Treacy headpiece built around the upside-down form of a rose—the inspiration came about organically, in every sense, from The Met’s existing collection of more than 33,000 objects. “What struck me, when the pieces were all on my wall here”—Bolton gestures to the pinboard—“was how many pieces in the collection have been inspired by the natural world.” Themes recurred: There were patterns of flowers, birds, butterflies. And there were constant references, he noticed, to the elements of earth, air, and water. All this would shape the formal organization of the show. “One of the things that resonated with me—and why I think nature seemed particularly relevant—was the impermanence and the transitory nature of fashion,” he says, “but also the cyclical nature of it: the rebirth.”



The exhibition's title refers to the ultra-fragile garments that Bolton has made the centerpiece of the show. So delicate that they can barely be handled, let alone hung on a mannequin, these "sleeping beauties" must lie flat and undisturbed in their cases. Most have what is known in the conservation trade as inherent vice: Because of the materials involved or the way these elements are bound together, they have progressive, irreversible degradation and will one day come to shreds. In the sleeping beauties, Bolton's team found the emblem for both the exhibition's sensory project—reviving the lost physical attributes of a garment—and its scientific goals.

"This show makes us reflect a bit more on what we need to do to make sure that we keep and maintain the integrity of an object," Max Hollein, The Met's director, says. "It will help us understand how to not only amplify the experience, but to resurrect the total authenticity of the object—and that will have an impact on other areas of the museum."

"A piece of clothing isn't something we purchase just to hang on a hanger or put on a mannequin," says the

photographer Nick Knight. "We have dreams in it and live our lives through it." Knight's digital-fashion company ShowStudio, which not long ago digitally animated a custom Gucci dress by Alessandro Michele in a Björk music video, is collaborating with Bolton to reanimate two garments in similar ways. Some crucial dresses will be brought to life again as Pepper's ghosts—a holographic illusion by which a flat-image projection appears as an object in three-dimensional space.

More broadly, the Costume Institute has undertaken a careful study of postures, perfumes, habits, and mores in the milieu where the garments first lived. "There are ball gowns—you could go to a dance in them," Knight

TAKING SHAPE

ABOVE: Beholding this coat, dress, and crinoline from Olivier Theyskens's fall 2000 collection, one can nearly hear the sumptuous sound of its silk moiré in motion—an auditory experience known among fashion conservators as *scroop* that's also on display in the exhibition. OPPOSITE: A British waistcoat from 1615–20.



explains. “You’d be in an environment where the way you held your fan, the way you held a glass of Champagne, how you curtsied, bowed, and danced: All those things were important.” The show will display the clothes, but it will also work to re-create the experience of encountering them. “The idea is, if you met somebody at one of these balls 150 years ago, what would it *feel* like?” he says. “Why would it be...exciting?”

Now, deep in the Costume Institute’s warren of office space, the conservator Elizabeth Shaeffer rolls out translucent sheets of Mylar trimmed to match the panels of a dress. The studio resembles a laboratory—bright, quiet, and filled with technical equipment. Even by The Met’s scrupulous standards, it is a place of exceptional care: Metal tables are draped, for the artifacts’ protection, with white cloth, and inside the doorway a foot mat is fixed to the floor with its adhesive surface facing upward to remove stray particles from the soles of

the shoes of everyone who enters. Shaeffer—attentive and soft-spoken—sorts the Mylar pieces on the table.

“This is a full-scale model from which a dress can be sewn,” she explains. Each piece has been traced from a panel of a sleeping-beauty dress—a noninvasive process that helps the conservators gather information about its structure. From the Mylar, the pattern forms are transferred onto paper, marked with a grid, while the dress is rendered digitally: the one form in which, in theory, it can live forever. “All of this information,” Bolton says, “is being used to bring it back to life—not only three-dimensionally, as it was meant to be on the body, but the *movement*.”

The specimen on the table today, a circa-1887 piece by Charles Frederick Worth, the landmark English designer whose House of Worth laid the groundwork for 20th-century couture, is the sleeping beauty that inspired the entire show. Once owned by an Astor, the garment is one of the exhibition’s most fragile, beset by warp loss: a form of degradation in which the long, shiny filaments of satin abrade away, leaving feathery, rip-like streaks. As with





most of the sleeping beauties, handing the dress—even delicately—hastens its decay; Bolton made the decision that the risk was worth the opportunity to gather detailed information about what the Worth dress, in its prime, had been. “For me, it’s like, yes, of course if you kept it in a drawer and it’s never seen ever again, that *does* slow the deterioration,” he says. But what would be the value of that?

A separate curatorial decision he made was to bring the dress—now faded into lovely pastels—back to life in its original colors. Sitting in her office off the conservation studio with Bolton, Shaeffer studies bits of chiffon near the seams, unfaded by daylight, and matches those colors to Pantone hues, from which the colors can be digitally re-created, for a Pepper’s ghost. (The team also used spectrophotographic analysis to pick out original color.)

“Something has gone a little wrong here,” Shaeffer notes, studying the colors on her screen. “This is an evening gown, so it would only come out at night, and gas lamps and early electric light bulbs were very warm in tone.”

She plays a draft of the animation that Knight’s team has sent, studying the motion of the dress. An avatar dressed in a computer rendering of the garment swirls and dances vigorously, seeming to kick its knees in the air. Bolton frowns.

“It’s a bit like *The King and I*,” he says gently.

Shaeffer draws closer to the screen. “I think the chiffon is a little too bouncy and doesn’t take into consideration the many layers of things that go underneath,” she murmurs.

If movement studies are an unorthodox conservation task, they are not the strangest in “Sleeping Beauties,” an exhibition that is also based largely in sound. The conservation room also contains an ornate, colorfully painted dress covered in aluminum flowers that Francesco Risso designed for this year’s Marni spring season. Another of The Met’s new acquisitions, it is recently back from the anechoic chamber at Binghamton University in New York, where Bolton recorded the clatter of the flowers against one another. The same process was used to capture the scroop associated with a historical dress, and both audio samples will be included in this exhibition.

Yet the real reason for including the Marni dress, Bolton explains, is not its sound but its association with scent. In his invitation for the runway show in which it featured, Risso described his experience being introduced to an enchanting perfume at a party in Paris at the age of 14, then spending his adulthood roaming the city, trying to discover its origin or its wearer.

One of the exhibition’s leading collaborators is the Berlin-based olfactory artist and researcher Sissel Tolaas, a pioneer in the work of creating—and recording—the world of smell. Trained as a chemist and a linguist, Tolaas spent seven years traveling the globe from her small hometown on an island in Norway with the goal of smelling everything. “I liked becoming a dog,” she says. “I built up massive

ABOUT FACE

The Upside-Down Rose hat from Philip Treacy’s spring 2000 haute couture collection, like so many of the pieces in “Sleeping Beauties,” channels the natural world.

BEAUTY NOTE

Housed inside refillable Art Deco–inspired glass, Chanel’s 31 Le Rouge Satin Lipstick in Rouge Byzantin hydrates with gardenia oil exclusively sourced from Gaujacq, France.



GARDEN VARIETY

ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A 1957 Balenciaga hat, Deirdre Hawken's Cauliflower Headpiece from 2013, a layered silk hat from the 1940s, and a 1942 Germaine Vittu hat. OPPOSITE: An anthurium-inspired bodice from Loewe's spring 2023 collection.

databases of scents; trained myself to understand the importance of smell in terms of memory, language, tolerance; and, after seven years, was ready to conquer the world."

Tolaas spent close to a year analyzing scents associated with both garments and their wearers for the Costume Institute exhibition. Her discoveries will become part of the displays, while certain scents will be smellable, reinterpreted for the exhibition halls. "Is it perfume from a dress / That makes me so digress?" T.S. Eliot wrote early in the 20th century. At The Met, visitors will be able to encounter fragrance elements of that time.

One room, devoted to the floral theme, will feature an array of hats with floral motifs. Another will be devoted to Millicent Rogers, the early-20th-century socialite and philanthropist. "I'm focusing on literally the molecules emitting from the various items that were used by this woman: the scents of her body, her habits, her culture, her rituals, the food she ate," Tolaas says. The data of science and the sensory mysteries of art emerge from one another.









DREAM SCENARIOS

ABOVE: Constantin Brancusi's *Sleeping Muse*, 1910.
OPPOSITE: A complete look from Rick Owens's spring 2022 Fogachine collection (courtesy of Rick Owens).

"I'm not 'perfuming spaces,'" she explains. "I'm highlighting or amplifying hidden information in the garments."

Rogers's collection, which includes Schiaparelli's famous seed-packet dress of 1937—an allusion to the designer's own past putting seeds in her mouth to try to grow a garden from within to make herself more beautiful—stands as evidence of the individuality and peculiarity of fashion: One person's taste can be just that, to an ecstatic degree. Growing beyond Rogers, there's Christian Dior's standard-setting Vilmorin dress, which references his childhood love of gardening, as a reader of his mother's Vilmorin-Andrieux seed catalogs. There is a resplendent Balenciaga hat made to look exactly like a cabbage, and—one of the great triumphs of awkward-chic—an example of prewar "hobble skirts": a flash-in-the-pan fashion that left women unable to walk with a normal gait. There is Sarah Burton's astonishing butterfly dress, with an explosion of fiery wings at the collar, alongside a butterfly-themed sleeping beauty from Charles James.

One of the most improbable of the exhibition's sleeping beauties is a coat, by Jonathan

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ELIZABETH DEBICKI

The actor who brought Princess Diana to life—and won a passel of awards in the process—is ready to transform anew. By Taylor Antrim.

She's poised for 30 seconds, ethereal in her Dior column dress, thanking the right people, her family, her boyfriend Kristian Rasmussen, the creatives on *The Crown*. And then Elizabeth Debicki, somewhat gloriously, goes blank. You can see it on her face as the adrenaline ebbs, as a trace of panic sets in. Here she is on the Golden Globes stage, and she can't think of anything else to say. "Goodness," she stammers. "Maybe...that's it?"

Debicki refused, at first, to watch the footage on YouTube, but then forced herself to, once. "Maybe that's it?" she says to me, appalled. "That has to be the most Australian thing anyone's ever said."

Equally Australian: shutting down a dance party, which Debicki did later that night alongside Andrew Scott and Billie Eilish "in this random room at the Chateau—but what a lovely room," she remembers. The whole Globes experience was the biggest moment of the Paris-born, Melbourne-raised actor's career. But it cost her too. Debicki, 33, who is in Manhattan to play muse and model to photographer Steven Meisel in the images you see across these pages, is someone who does not relish the glare of public attention and actually has to recover from it. "I find carpets quite overwhelming," she admits.

At six foot three, Debicki can't help but draw attention, but in person she's cloaked in the retiring aspect of a graduate student emerging from a library carrel. Long hair, wire glasses, jeans, vintage work shirt, turtleneck, Adidas. No one seems to recognize her on the busy SoHo streets, and miraculously we find an empty-ish café with a menu of adaptogenic teas. She has missed lunch and chooses an infusion with beetroot as sustenance.

The cause for all the Globes hubbub, after which she retreated to the desert of New Mexico for two weeks with Rasmussen (about whom she speaks with careful privacy-hoarding circumspection), was her two-season turn as Diana, Princess of Wales, a catalyzing performance for an actor who has had a varied résumé of supporting roles (in *Widows*, *Tenet*, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* and *Vol. 3*) but was, prior to *The Crown*,

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BRANCHING OUT

Debicki wears a dress from Vetements by Guram Gvasalia for spring 2024 (courtesy of Vetements by Guram Gvasalia). In this story: hair, Guido; hair colorist @lenaott; makeup, Dame Pat McGrath. Details, see In This Issue.

PRODUCED BY PROON AT ART + COMMERCE. SET DESIGN: MARY HOWARD. SPECIAL THANKS TO MHS ARTISTS. SPECIAL THANKS TO HOOK PROPS. SPECIAL THANKS TO HIGHLINE STAGES. DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE.





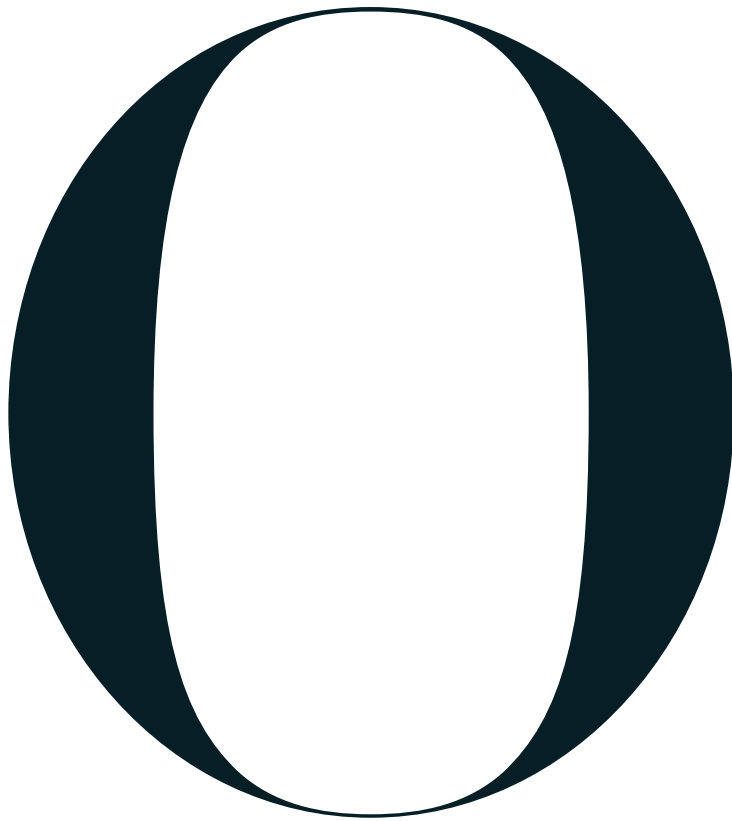
Old Souls

A new production of *Uncle Vanya* brings the eternal wisdom of Anton Chekhov to the stage. By Adrienne Miller.
Photographed by Norman Jean Roy.

STAGE HANDS

The cast, FROM FAR LEFT: Mia Katigbak, Alison Pill, Anika Noni Rose, Alfred Molina, Jonathan Hadary, William Jackson Harper, Jayne Houdyshell, and Steve Carell. Hair, Lacy Redway, Unilever Haircare Brand Ambassador; makeup by Fulvia Farolfi for Chanel. Details, see In This Issue. Fashion Editor: Edward Bowleg III.





On a late winter morning, the cast of the new production of *Uncle Vanya*, starring Steve Carell and directed by Lila Neugebauer, begins to arrive at the Vivian Beaumont Theater in New York's Lincoln Center. The actors—Carell, Alfred Molina, Anika Noni Rose, William Jackson Harper, Alison Pill, Jayne Houdyshell, Mia Katigbak, and Jonathan Hadary—had recently assembled for a read-through of the script, a new adaptation by Heidi Schreck of the Anton Chekhov masterwork, but this morning's gathering for *Vogue* marks the true beginning of their journey together. They loiter around a catering table and introduce themselves. Rehearsals begin tomorrow and the play opens in April.

"A great director, a great translation, and a classic play, those three things," says Carell, are what drew him to *Vanya*. "The play also feels current and speaks to human behavior that hasn't changed in a hundred years," he adds. "Chekhov nails down the essence of how human beings think, and talk, and react, and feel the life around them."

Uncle Vanya is indeed an astonishingly modern play, with its meditations on money, class, work, the environment, and masculinity. But it's also profoundly human in its themes: the finitude of life, lost dreams, and unrequited love. It cuts so deeply

because "the dilemmas are of the heart, and completely comprehensible," says Hadary, the veteran New York stage actor who plays Waffles. "They are not characters in a play. They're people. They're us." Carell concurs: "They're just so specifically drawn that they feel absolutely real and lived-in." He pauses, gathering his thoughts on the playwright. "I mean, the guy *was* a genius."

Uncle Vanya was first staged at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1899 by the impresario Konstantin Stanislavski, who, as the founder of the performance process called the Method, changed acting forever. Chekhov considered his plays comedies, drolly complaining in his letters that Stanislavski's original production missed the humor in *Uncle Vanya*. But the play is both: a comedy about misunderstandings and misconstruals ("They're always saying the wrong things to the wrong people," Carell observes), and a tragedy about lives wasted—or stalled in a holding pattern.

Here is the story: A vain, pompous professor, Serabryakov (Molina), retires to "his" (the quotation marks are crucial) 26-room country estate with his second wife, Yelena (Rose). Their arrival disturbs the peace (or inertia) of the household: Resentments are aired, passions are inflamed,

rages are unearthed. The professor announces his intention to sell, but the estate, we learn, is not his—it belongs to Sonya (Pill), his adult daughter from his first marriage. Sonya and her uncle Vanya function as the managers of the estate, where Vanya's feminist mother, Mama Voinitski (Houdyshell), a nanny named Marina (Katigbak), and a guitar-plucking family friend (Hadary)—the aforementioned Waffles—also live. Astrov (Harper), a local doctor, environmentalist, depressive, and probable alcoholic rounds out the cast.

We have complicated feelings about each of them. They are all, as Molina says, "terribly, infuriatingly human": They're emotionally stunted, they mock and belittle and use each other as scapegoats, yet they are, ultimately, good-hearted and (like all of us) trapped in cycles of self-destruction and self-deception. In the play's climactic scene, one of the more famous in theater history, Vanya loses his mind, gets a gun, fires (twice) at the professor, whom he blames—unfairly—for all the injustices he believes plague him, including, apparently, a failed writing career. ("I could have been a Schopenhauer," he howls, "a Dostoevsky.") Says Carell: "He's created this world of illusion for himself to get by. And then when he actually can't even create the illusion, it's heartbreaking."

What follows are questions about how to live with shame, regret, and grief, about how to continue existing when the dream of life has been deferred. "The final battle of the play is getting to a place of acceptance that does not feel resigned," says Pill. "The message is that you have to actively accept your circumstances at every point and not just resign yourself to them. Even though, from the outside, acceptance and resignation may look very alike."

Last year, Neugebauer, who has led a series of riveting productions, including Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's current Broadway hit, *Appropriate*, was invited to direct a play at Lincoln Center. She and André Bishop, the organization's producing artistic director, discovered a shared love of Chekhov. "I suddenly felt that *Vanya* had everything to say to me about my own life," says Neugebauer, "which

I've learned is a bit of a pattern with Chekhov plays and aging." Neugebauer is just 38 but adds, "I guess I've now lived long enough for the play to break my heart." She knew she wanted to collaborate on an adaptation with Schreck, whose 2019 play *What the Constitution Means to Me* was the most produced show in American theaters last fall. Schreck and Neugebauer have known each other since a 2008 production in Louisville, Kentucky, of *A Christmas Carol*; later, they lived in the same Brooklyn brownstone.

There are four major Chekhov plays—*The Cherry Orchard*, *The Seagull*, *Three Sisters*, and *Uncle Vanya*—all written toward the end of the Russian master's remarkable life. (He died in 1904 at 44, after years of chronic illness from tuberculosis.) *Vanya*, however, is the one that has recently percolated through the culture. The 2021 Japanese film *Drive My Car* follows a widowed theater actor and director as he stages *Uncle Vanya* in Hiroshima. Other recent productions include last fall's one-man National Theatre adaptation with Andrew Scott in London and a brilliant 2020 West End production adapted by playwright Conor McPherson. Another well-regarded *Vanya*, starring David Cromer, was staged last year in a Manhattan loft.

Although Schreck is fluent in Russian (in the '90s, she worked as a journalist in St. Petersburg), she collaborated with interpreter Tatyana Khaikin to create a new translation. The pair spent hours parsing every word, and the result is a universal yet Americanized language—compacted and pared down, warm and accessible. The setting, too, is near-future America, and the play does feel unnervingly timely. Chekhov wrote *Vanya* in the period between the emancipation of the serfs and the Russian Revolution, and there is a deep sense of unease underlying the action. The surrounding forests are being destroyed, the rivers are drying up, animals are dying, peasants are rummaging through the compost heap and banging on the front door. "The world is on fire around them," says Schreck, "and they don't know how to deal with that fact."

For the Tony Award-winning Rose, *Uncle Vanya* speaks to our present

moment because "as a society, we've been so stunted. We've been trying to figure out: Where do we go now? How do we pick everything back up?" Schreck and Neugebauer have increased the ages of several of the characters and given greater prominence to a local teenager named Yefim, played here by Spencer Donovan Jones. The presence of this very young person takes on a powerful resonance: How will future generations judge the lives of these characters?

At the center of it all, of course, is Vanya—and Carell became the person Schreck heard in her head as she wrote this version. "We thought he should be honestly funny," she says. "But always with the best actors, there is also a glimpse of a wound." Neugebauer agrees: "I've always felt that his comedy actually comes from a deep well of sadness. Steve is an extremely well-adjusted person in

The characters are
"just so specifically
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and lived-in," says
Carell. "I mean, the
guy *was* a genius"

life—but in his work, I've always felt that his humor is deeply rooted in his humanity."

And who *is* Vanya? Bitter, sarcastic, cynical, defensive, lazy, self-mocking, and self-protective. Vanya makes shabby little excuses for all his failures. It is impossible for him to be happy. But he's also deeply intelligent, funny, sweet, courageous, and, ultimately, heroic. "I think, at his core, he is a very decent person," Carell says. "A very kind person. He was inspired and full of life, full of thought and passion." Carell, Neugebauer says, embodied all the qualities she and Schreck thought of when they thought of Vanya: "Who is a person, even in their most self-deprecating, even in perhaps self-pitying and self-lacerating moments, I would still want to be around?"

Back to the theater: This is the first time the actors have seen their dressing rooms. The rooms are narrow—a

table with an illuminated mirror above it and a long red upholstered bench on the other side. On many of the actors' desks are binders with Schreck's script. At this early stage, they are experimenting, pondering, posing questions. Katigbak, a downtown theater veteran and cofounder of the National Asian American Theatre Company who is making her Broadway debut as Marina, observes that her character seems to treat everyone like a child. The legendary character actress Houdyshell, who plays Vanya's mother, says, "I think she's quite dominant and domineering. She's a very independent woman, and an ardent feminist." How disappointed, Houdyshell asks, is her character in Vanya for not picking up the torch of political activism? Molina wonders if his character, the professor, who has clearly been forced into retirement, had been, in our contemporary term, canceled? Had Yelena, God forbid, been his student?

"Astrov talks about numbness," says Harper of the doctor character, "which is something I've found myself feeling a lot—dread about what happens later." Astrov, like Chekhov, has a deep reverence for the natural world; he is a romantic, yet he is also the most clinical and detached. In a state of despair, Vanya asks Astrov how he can start over. "What new life?" Astrov replies in Schreck's script. "No new life is coming, not for us." For a time Harper thought about giving up acting: "There's something about being an adult, where the chance of turning your life into something else is less and less likely."

The cast has been called for the photo. They crowd into an elevator and ascend to the bright theater lobby. A broad corridor with a panoramic view of Lincoln Center leads to a windowed rehearsal room where an assortment of props have been assembled. A member of the production crew announces, "Last looks!" and everyone is suddenly very still. It's possible no one is actually breathing.

Molina asks, genially, "Do you want us to give you any kind of mood?"

"Yes!" says Pill. "Are we all Serious Vanya?"

Or are they Funny Vanya?

The answer could go either way. *Uncle Vanya*, of course, is both. □

THE BIG SHORT

Kendall Jenner embraces the cool and kicky freedoms of long, bare legs in the season's most dramatic silhouettes. Photographed by Colin Dodgson.



A large, leafy tree stands in a field of white flowers. A measuring tape is wrapped around the tree's trunk. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

FIELD OF DREAMS

Amid the darling buds of May,
Kendall Jenner takes her
Max Mara jacket, tank top, and
skirt lying down; maxmara.com. **Loewe** boots.
Fashion Editor: Max Ortega.

PURPLE HAZE

Jenner casts a dreamy spell in a mohair-silk Michael Kors Collection sweater; michaelkors.com. Polo Ralph Lauren sneakers.





OUT ON A LIMB

Has monochromatic dressing ever seemed quite so shimmering and splendid? Hermès shirt, top, and shorts; Hermès boutiques. Victoria Beckham boots.



YOU'RE IT!
Jenner makes
a run for it in
an electric pink
Khaite dress;
khaite.com.



PRECIOUS METALS

Glittering Tom Ford top and coruscating fringed shorts; tomford.com. Miu Miu shoes.

BEAUTY NOTE

Bare legs get the treatment they deserve with L'Oréal Paris True Match Lumi Glotion, which works as a luminous tinted moisturizer for both face and body.

LOVE BUG

Layered over bikini bottoms and a slip of a top, an argyle cardigan begins to seem less square, more delightfully daring. All from Prada; prada.com.





TREE HUGGER

Chanel jacket and shorts; select Chanel boutiques. In this story: hair, Tamás Tüzes; makeup, Mary Phillips. Details, see In This Issue.

STAR POWER

Model Felice Nova Noordhoff wears a **Chanel High Jewelry** brooch, **Van Cleef & Arpels** earrings, a **Chopard** necklace and bracelets, a **Pomellato** necklace, a **Tiffany & Co.** necklace and bracelet, and watches from **Dior** and **Piaget**. **Moschino** jacket and shirt. Fashion Editor: Julia Sarr-Jamois.



CHECK IT OUT

Model Lulu Tenney wears a **Chanel High Jewelry** earring, a **Cartier High Jewelry** necklace, and a **Tiffany & Co.** brooch. **Marni** blazer and sweater.

When haute joaillerie meets easygoing sportswear—from rococo jackets to swishy skirt sets—an electric new vision for transitional dressing is born. Photographed by Stefan Ruiz.

Shining Examples



BRIGHT IDEAS

Model Paloma Elsesser's blinding smile finds stiff competition in an ammonite-inspired earring from **De Beers**, rings from **Tiffany & Co.**, and a **Pomellato** bracelet. **Balenciaga** hoodie.



FACE VALUE

Actor Stanley Simons—most recently seen in Sean Durkin's affecting *The Iron Claw*—wears a **Dior Men** earring and necklaces from **David Yurman**, **Homer, Chrome Hearts**, and **Tiffany & Co.** **Wooyoungmi** blazer.







WINNING STREAKS

Noordhoff (FAR LEFT) wears a **Tiffany & Co.** earring, **Briony Raymond** necklace, and **Van Cleef & Arpels** brooch. **Polo Ralph Lauren** cardigan, bikini top, and skirt. Tenney wears a **Van Cleef & Arpels** earring and necklaces by **Mikimoto** and **Chanel High Jewelry**. **Givenchy** sweater and skirt.

BEAUTY NOTE

Rice proteins in Aveda Invati Advanced Thickening Foam plumps up each strand of hair for full-bodied slick styles.



FORCE OF NATURE

Actor Jay Will, a standout at Sundance for his turn in *Rob Peace*—a biographical drama directed by (and costarring) Chiwetel Ejiofor—goes high contrast in a **Van Cleef & Arpels** brooch, **Bulgari** earrings, and necklaces from **Éliou**, **Tiffany & Co.**, **Vesper Obscura**, **Cartier**, **John Hardy**, and **Yutai**. Off-White jacket.



DOUBLE VISION

Model Amelia Gray wears **Moschino** earrings with necklaces from **Miu Miu** and **Swarovski**, an **Omega** watch, an **Irene Neuwirth** bracelet, and **Cartier** eyeglasses. **Miu Miu** top, briefs, and skirt. In this story: hair, Mustafa Yanaz; makeup, Susie Sobol for Eye8 Beauty. Details, see In This Issue.

The Get



Like a Dream

Whether you're out to dinner or off to bed: Make way for an enchanted, diaphanous evening.



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AND MARCUS PIGGOTT, VOGUE, SEPTEMBER 2016.



1. LA DOUBLEJ DINNER PLATE, \$220 FOR A SET OF TWO; LADDOUBLEJ.COM. 2. ALBERTA FERRETTI DRESS, \$2,395; NEIMAN MARCUS STORES. 3. ALTUZARRA CLUTCH, \$595; ALTUZARRA.COM. 4. BY WALID PILLOW, \$645; ABASK.COM. 5. OLIVIA VON HALLE SLIPPER, \$865; OLIVIAVONHALLE.COM. 6. DE BEERS NECKLACE; DEBEERS.COM. 7. COACH DRESS; SIMILAR STYLES AT COACH.COM. 8. SLEEPER PAJAMA SET, \$390; THE-SLEEPER.COM. 9. GUCCI SHOE, \$940; GUCCI.COM. 10. ROSS J. BARR SLEEP PATCHES, \$21; ROSSBARR.COM. 11. MALONE SOULIERS X TABITHA SIMMONS BAG; MALONESOULIERS.US. SHOP THE ISSUE ONLINE AT VOGUE.COM/SHOPPING

NOT BLACK AND WHITE

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undergraduate degree, but after a year there, she could apply for the two-year master's program, and that's what she did, more or less. She skipped most of her classes so she could spend all her time in her studio. "I just wanted to make my own stuff."

Her professional career started while she was still in school, in 2019. The academy was honoring the wildly popular artist known as KAWS (Brian Donnelly) at its annual Tribeca Ball, when the students open their studios and everyone is invited in to see their work. KAWS was so struck by Park's drawings that he bought one on the spot, and posted her work on Instagram. (He has 4 million followers.) "I knew about his work, but I didn't know I was talking to him," she remembers. "I asked him, 'Do you do art?'" When she found out he was that night's honoree, "I was so mortified. He was very sweet about it. And that's how everything exploded."

"Two First Names," a show with Ana Benaroya at Garey Gallery in Los Angeles, quickly followed, and all four of Park's drawings in it were sold. A passel of group shows in New York then took place, and there were solo shows, too—at Half Gallery in New York, and at Blum & Poe, first in Tokyo in 2021 and then in Los Angeles. (She has since joined the gallery, now Blum without the Poe.) And then in 2022, she had her first solo museum show at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah.

The works in her new show are three-dimensional. Tired of people asking if her drawings are preparations for paintings, she turned her surface into a relief by cutting squares and arches into a sheet of two-inch-thick insulation foam, which she glues on top of a thick wood panel. She then covers the whole surface with rice paper and draws on that. The work becomes an object. "There's a stubbornness in me," she says. "I love drawing to the deepest of my core. If something is on a panel or canvas instead of paper, people say, 'Oh, it's art now.' People call these paintings." But what does she call them? I ask her. "I call them drawings. Let's celebrate it!" Does she see herself making sculpture? "That's a goal that I'm inching toward," she says.

Park gets to the studio around noon and works until midnight or later—she turns her phone off and locks it in a box while she's there. Her apartment is nearby and she's in bed by two in the morning, unless she goes out to Bushwick's clubs. "I love dancing, but it's all sober dancing. I don't really drink. And

I just love listening to music." She also enjoys going out for dinner with the painter Sasha Gordon or other artist friends. Park recently broke up with the artist boyfriend she'd been with for three and a half years. Alone in the studio, she likes to have something going on in the background, but usually not music. She listens to a lot of comedy podcasts (she lists *Las Culturistas* by Bowen Yang and Matt Rogers, and *SmartLess* by Jason Bateman, Sean Hayes, and Will Arnett) and loves stand-up comics. "That's one of the hardest professions because it's a combination of timing, writing, and performance, and then you have no control over the audience." She also listens to audiobooks, and her taste is eclectic—she's recently listened to *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang, *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann, *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, and the Britney Spears memoir. And she's a big fan of familiar TV shows, like *Gilmore Girls*, which she watches often. "It can't be a show that's too good or a show I've never seen before."

Somehow she finds time to see exhibitions in museums and galleries all over town. She saw The Met's "Manet/Degas" show four times and was blown away by Max Beckmann's "seductive" and "twisted" World War I drawings at the Neue Galerie. She also sees the shows of many young artists. "Anna makes it to every opening," says Gordon, "which indicates how supportive she is."

Not many artists have built careers on drawings, let alone black-and-white drawings. Vija Celmins and Robert Longo come to mind. "The absence of color was never really a conscious decision," Park tells me. "It's similar to someone picking up an instrument, and it feels right or natural. There are so many formal qualities that I wanted to explore within the world of charcoal, paint, and ink that I didn't need color." But at the age of 27 and on top of the art world, her future is wide open. "I'm not crossing off color quite yet," she says, "but I don't want to do it just to do it. For me, drawing is the fastest, clearest path to getting what I want to say out of my system."

She pauses, and then adds, "But I don't know, maybe I'll start painting. We'll see." □

A MOTHER'S STORY

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says Manhattan Theater Club's artistic director, Lynne Meadow, but it is ultimately about "optimism and courage and humor—that's how the character meets adversity."

At the end of our interview, I ask Herzog if there's anything else she wants to add. "I think there's a deficit out there in terms of disability consciousness," she tells me. "I want people to be more conscious of their fear about disability, about illness, about it clouding their ability to enter a story without the distancing sensation of pity. Pity is what allows you to be like: 'That's not me.'" She is aware that the course of her own life in recent years has potentially added a layer of gravity to the production. "When I wrote the play, my daughter was alive. But my project was to write not about the tragedy of having a sick kid, but about the kind of community and solidarity and strange blessings, to use a cheesy word, that emerged from caring for a sick child, and the way this woman is making meaning and finding community. And so my concern now is just that people continue to see it in that light."

When rehearsals start in late February, there are icebreakers, stories told about past jobs. "We just kind of hung out together as a cast and sat around talking," says McAdams. She is clearly newly buoyed by the energy of New York—seeing old friends, having her kids visit the penguins at the Central Park Zoo, experiencing the friendly clubbiness of backstage Broadway life for the first time. "We went out to get some lunch yesterday between rehearsals and ran into the cast of *Cabaret* at the line for the deli," she says. Learning lines for a play—particularly when playing a character who is onstage for the entirety of it—is no small endeavor: "I'm glad we live in a time when it looks like everybody is talking to themselves, because I'm doing that constantly."

Amid all the granular preparations, there's a more profound shift taking place. "I understand the role physiologically a bit more," McAdams says. "Her center of gravity is different from mine. She's definitely more tired than I am, and that presents itself differently in her body." And having spoken with more parents of children with particular, sometimes challenging needs, she's found a kind of common ground as a mother. "This play is so much about the preciousness of life, the joy to be in life, and my children remind me of that all the time. It's helping me not take this process so seriously, to not get mired down in the 'What if people don't like it? What if I'm not good? What if it all goes up in my face?' It's really easy to leave that at the door when you're dealing with something about so much more than that." □

WITH NAIL AND I

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 102

immediately shredded by my talons. Next was an Issey Miyake Grecian-draped gown in sheer silver—and if there’s a fashion ambassador for the modern clean girl (which, we should note, isn’t just a term for girls, or people who shower a lot; anyone can be a clean girl with the right highlighter and Hailey Bieber-approved moisturizer), it would be Issey. I was reminded of my first Met Gala, when Hamish Bowles—a man I would trust in any style emergency—encouraged me to wipe off my nail art: “Not for right here, not for right now,” he smiled. Now I felt, with my child-length nails but adult sophistication, sexy in a more sly way. Plus, I was able to pull up my own underpants. Now that’s a win-win.

So, was there a victor in the experiment? Who had triumphed in the face-off between sleek practicality and sensual excess? The short nail may be winning on runways at the moment, but Michelle told me that her clients who are “long-nail people will always be long-nail people.” It’s not a trend for them, but a way of life. It would be easy to say that the devotees must have pampered lives, not working with their hands, but how many times have we seen someone dole out cash at a register or corral their kids with a nail as long as some pinkies themselves? The nail becomes a nexus of power for them, just as the absence of a long nail served the same purpose for the women I knew growing up.

And is it wrong to say that I may not belong to one sect or the other but am, instead, whatever the nail equivalent of bi(coastal) is? I love each expression precisely because of how different it can make me feel, taking me from a beacon of old-school femininity (with a twist) to something more practical but equally delicate. If the short nail is Audrey Hepburn, the long one is Sophia Loren. In modern terms, let’s say my Natalie Portman sun is facing off against my powerful Cardi B rising. And don’t we all contain multitudes? □

THE DREAMLIFE OF ZENDAYA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 136

Side Story, whom Zendaya had seen on Broadway in *Dear Evan Hansen* years earlier. After that came the prep.

Despite her Amazonian figure, Zendaya is no athlete and insists that she only works out when she has to. What she knew about the world of tennis was “Serena and Venus—that’s all I connected to. And probably Roger Federer.”

With input from Brad Gilbert (now Coco Gauff’s coach), Zendaya, Faist, and O’Connor trained together for several months, on three parallel courts in the mornings, then went to the gym, had lunch, and did rehearsals.

Learning the game was tough. “The first little while was getting the basics, trying to just hit the fucking thing,” she says. “One day you’d be like, Oh, shit, I cracked it. I figured it out. I got it. Come back in the next day...” *Poof*, it was gone. Besides Gilbert, Zendaya also worked with Eric Taino, the former ATP Tour player who instructed the young actresses cast as Venus and Serena Williams in 2021’s *King Richard*.

The time helped to establish the complicated, three-part chemistry between her, O’Connor, and Faist. “It was my first big American studio movie, and she was really good at making both Mike and me feel at ease,” says O’Connor, who also starred this spring in Alice Rohrwacher’s *La Chimera*. She wanted them “to take the work seriously, but not take ourselves too seriously,” adds Faist. “I think it’s a real gift to be able to do what we do...and at times it’s very, very silly. I think she very much acknowledges the smoke and mirrors, and also the art form that it can be, and the complexities of all of it.”

Case in point: During tennis training, feeling that she was falling behind—Faist, for one, had played a little in high school, and it showed—Zendaya sussed out a different way. “I started treating it more like dance, like, Okay, it’s more copying mannerisms, copying footwork, whatever. So everything then became shadowing,” she explains. Her body double would hit a ball, and Zendaya would mimic her gestures—from the way she held her arms to the stutter in her step. At the end of the day, the job was to fake it, so fake it she did. “The ball comes in in post,” she says, “so why am I so stressed about hitting this ball, or this ball hitting me?”

The tactic worked. “I swear that after an hour’s session, she had it down,” O’Connor reports. “She looked like a pro. It was a real miracle.”

As Zendaya tells me this story, however—some 18 months after *Challengers* wrapped—a touch of irritation still edges her voice, what I peg as the low-grade humiliation of not quite *nailing the thing*. It seems a good moment to ask if she identifies with Tashi’s competitiveness.

She considers this. “I mean, listen, she takes the shit to a whole new level,” she says at last. “[But] I’d say, yeah, I’m competitive, in the sense that I want to

work hard and I try to not be competitive with anyone else. I try to just be like, *I already did that, okay, so now I got to do better.*” In her words, “sometimes it’s a bit crippling,” the pressure she puts on herself.

“I guess where I was trying to empathize with my character—because it’s my job, even though I think she does some shit that I would absolutely never do—is in how nobody’s like, ‘Tashi, are you okay? What do you need?’” she continues. “She’s just always running shit, and nobody is taking any of that off of her shoulders.”

Everybody needs something from her, I suggest.

“Yeah,” Zendaya says. “She’s making all the decisions. She is doing all the stuff. So I imagine that she’s really just calling all the shots. She’s, like, everybody’s mom.”

Of course, the cost of Zendaya’s ever-mounting influence and visibility has been her privacy, and the ability to lead anything resembling a normal life. As they began working, “I saw pretty quickly just how famous Z was,” Faist says. It was spring 2022, not long after season two of *Euphoria* had aired, and “she was like, Oh, I just can’t step out of my house. It really hit her how much her life had kind of changed.”

Zendaya will later describe the same thing happening to Holland—who had started out in the West End, starring in *Billy Elliot the Musical* as a child—following the release of *Spider-Man: Homecoming* in 2017. “We were both very, very young, but my career was already kind of going, and his changed overnight. One day you’re a kid and you’re at the pub with your friends, and then the next day you’re Spider-Man,” she says. “I definitely watched his life kind of change in front of him. But he handled it really beautifully.” (This May, Holland returns to his theater roots in a new London production of *Romeo & Juliet*. Zendaya says she “could not be more proud. I’m going to try to see as many shows as I possibly can.”)

On the subject of Holland, she also recalls a trip to Paris in fall 2022, when the couple planned to visit the Louvre. Well, the powers that be didn’t really want them there: The feedback was, “It’s already busy. You might make it worse.” But they decided to go anyway—information that became impossible to escape that week on social media, as shots of the pair holding hands while they listened to a guide, or posing in front of the *Mona Lisa*, circulated far and wide. “It was actually fine,” Zendaya

says now. “You just kind of get used to the fact that, Oh, I’m also one of these art pieces you’re going to take a picture of. I just gotta be totally cool with it and just live my life.” And, anyway, the fame thing sort of redeemed itself in the end: The museum let them linger after closing time. “It was one of the coolest experiences ever,” she says, her eyes flashing like a child’s. “It was like *Night at the Museum*.”

Zendaya wrestles with how to exist in public—what to share, what to show up to, how to avoid it all becoming too overwhelming. At one point none of it felt like a choice: “I think growing up, I always felt like when someone asks for a picture, I have to do it, all the time. You have to say yes, because you need to be grateful that you’re here,” she says. “And while I still feel that way, I also have learned that I can say no, and I can say kindly that I’m having a day off, or I’m just trying to be to myself today, and I don’t actually have to perform all the time.”

It’s a matter of sustainability, how she can continue to make this business that she loves so dearly work for her. “Because I don’t necessarily want my kids to have to deal with this,” she says, long arms now wrapped around her knees. “And what does my future look like? Am I going to be a public-facing person forever?”

The dream scenario, to her mind, is being able to “make things and pop out when I need to pop out, and then have a safe and protected life with my family, and not be worried that if I’m not delivering something all the time, or not giving all the time, that everything’s going to go away. I think that’s always been a massive anxiety of mine: this idea that people will just be like, Actually, I know I’ve been with you since you were 14, but I’m over you now because you’re boring.”

It’s why she loves being on set so much—nowhere is she freer, safer, more focused and creatively engaged. And when she isn’t shooting, she’ll wander around with her handheld camera and observe scenes she isn’t in. She has dreams of becoming a filmmaker, so she pays close attention to the way things are storyboarded, how notes are delivered, how her directors rehearse and work with their crew—“picking things from different people and hopefully one day not being afraid, and trying to do it myself,” she says.

“If there is a person who could be a director without it being a vanity idea for herself, it is Zendaya,” Guadagnino contends. “She has such a vast curiosity towards the real that, combined with a

rigorous discipline and a sort of scientific interest in the technique, I think she would be amazing at it.”

I ask if she feels she has a peer group in Hollywood, people she can connect with about how strange their lives are. I am thinking, of course, of people like her *Dune: Part Two* castmates Chalamet, Austin Butler, and Florence Pugh, a who’s who of bright young things. Although, at 32, Butler is the elder statesman of the group, he, too, has Disney Channel roots. “A little bit,” she says. “I think there could be more. I don’t know. I keep to myself a lot, which is my own fault. But also, I love and I’m grateful for my peers, but I would love to see more who look a little bit more like me around me. I think that that is something that is crucial and necessary.” (Significantly, she counts Colman Domingo—who plays Rue’s grizzled Narcotics Anonymous sponsor, Ali, in *Euphoria*—among her closest friends.) She has said in the past that when she begins directing, she’d like her stars to “always be Black women.”

This point, about community and representation, eventually brings us back to Serena Williams, who was inevitably on Zendaya’s mind as she worked on *Challengers*. A couple of months after wrapping, Zendaya flew to New York for the US Open, where she and her mother caught one of the final matches in Williams’s swan song season. What impresses her about the Williams sisters most? “Fucking all of it,” she thunders back. “The story, the amount of pressure, the microscope that they were under, the loneliness they must have felt—because it’s already lonely to be a tennis player, but to be a Black female tennis player, I can’t imagine.” The presence of a large and vocal crowd at major matches is another thing: The concept of live performance “absolutely terrifies” Zendaya, even as a former theater kid. “Like, we’re going to put you in a very stressful, anxiety-inducing situation where you have to compete and there are millions of people watching,” she says. “And you have to win...and be nice about it.”

About six weeks later she is repeating much of this to Williams directly. We’re on a Zoom with the tennis legend, proposed and organized by Zendaya herself. Logging on two minutes before the official start time, I was pleased (if a bit alarmed) to find both women already chatting away—Zendaya, in another neutral knit (this one oatmeal-colored); Williams, in a black tank top and Nike Dri-Fit cap at her home in Florida. (As

we’ll soon learn, she’s broken her “no calls after 3 p.m.” rule to fit Zendaya in.)

The ensuing conversation—one that I’d been prepared to lead but eventually felt like I was eavesdropping on—meanders from a close read of *Challengers* (Williams loved the performances; “hated” the ambiguity of the ending), to their pressure-cooker childhoods and tortured relationships to social media. At one point, Williams bemoans Tashi’s decision to go to college instead of immediately turning pro. This makes me wonder: Both Williams and Zendaya began their careers so young. Did they ever worry about what they would do if things didn’t work out?

“That was my question as well for Z—if it’s okay for me to call you that,” Williams says. (It is, Zendaya indicates, very much okay.) “What was the other option for you? What were your goals growing up?”

“Hmm. It’s funny,” Zendaya says, “because it’s something that I’m figuring out now. I don’t know how much of a choice I had. I have complicated feelings about kids and fame and being in the public eye, or being a child actor. We’ve seen a lot of cases of it being detrimental.... And I think only now, as an adult, am I starting to go, Oh, okay, wait a minute: I’ve only ever done what I’ve known, and this is *all* I’ve known. I’m almost going through my angsty teenager phase now, because I didn’t really have the time to do it before. I felt like I was thrust into a very adult position: I was becoming the breadwinner of my family very early, and there was a lot of role-reversal happening, and just kind of becoming *grown*, really.” She’d felt that she needed to be “this perfect being, and be everything that everyone needs me to be, and live up to all these expectations.”

Inevitably, that tunnel vision cost her the pleasure of perspective. “Now, when I have these moments in my career—like, my first time leading a film that’s actually going to be in a theater—I feel like I shrink, and I can’t enjoy all the things that are happening to me, because I’m like *this*”—Zendaya balls up her fists. “I’m very *tense*, and I think that I carry that from being a kid and never really having an opportunity to just *try* shit. And I wish I went to school.”

Williams listens sympathetically. She, too, felt like she “had no other option” when she was younger—for more on this, see *King Richard*—and suffered through the itchiness of doing the same thing for a little too long. But then she began taking college courses, and went to design school, and launched Serena

Ventures, her venture capital firm—and all while she was still playing tennis. As it turned out, the options were there; they always had been. She just had to find them on her own.

Williams asks more questions. How does going to school on a television set work? (To hear Zendaya tell it, only barely.) Does Zendaya find acting “healing”? (In a way.) Why has she mostly stopped using Instagram? (Because it was making her “very unhappy and anxious.”) Toward the end of the hour, Zendaya poses the billion-dollar query of our post-pandemic age. “How do you balance work, and life...”

Williams snorts with laughter. “Ask someone else.”

Zendaya laughs too. “...and family, and your own personal passions? Because that’s something I’m still really trying to.”

Ultimately, Williams’s answer is with people you trust to lighten your load—and with boundaries. (It’s worth noting that by now, the time is about 3:49 p.m.) Zendaya, a Virgo, is a little scandalized by the first idea (“I’m like, *I just have to do it myself*”), but she can understand its efficacy.

As the two women promise to exchange information and “hang out” someday in LA—“I’d love to pick your brain about life and business,” Zendaya says shyly. “I think I need more mentors and community and people around”—I wonder if I’m seeing the stirrings of a new phase for Zendaya. She’s been the precocious neophyte, the intriguing ingenue. Now that her star is shining more brightly than ever, how will she use its light? □

STATES OF WONDER

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troupe of incroyables—the dandies who emerged at the French Revolution, with all their affectations—came hollering down the runway, their voluminous coats rolled up like ships in full sail, their tea-stained organza shirts with high, high necks and hems round their knees. Those incroyables (among them the winsome 17-year-old Camilla Nickerson, face whitened around the eyes like an 18th-century floozy) carried gnarled sticks, wore knitted hats trimmed with red, white, and blue ribbons, and cried out like an avenging horde.

It was all over in a few minutes, but every last detail was perfection, and one felt that a star had been born. Joan Burstein (a.k.a. Mrs. B), owner of Browns, then the most fashionable shop in London, told John that she wanted everything—and she wanted it

the day after. He wheeled his dress rail all the way from college to the boutique (he couldn’t afford a car) to style its windows; Barbra Streisand and Diana Ross were his first customers. The late-18th-century-style waistcoats with buttons made of George VI coins, pierced for fastening, had to be restitched (by me; I was two years below John and gladly did his bidding) with ivory-hued plastic examples—a crotchety passerby had noted that one was not allowed to pierce the image of a monarch!

John’s next presentation, Afghanistan Repudiates Western Ideals—a static one, as John didn’t have the money to put on a show—was illustrated with a 1920s *Punch* cartoon showing an Afghan subject of King Amanullah Khan stomping on a bowler hat. It was a treasure trove of rich brown and wine tones, Afghan furry hats, and over-scaled jackets and waistcoats scrunched up—but by the time of his third staging, *The Ludic Game*, he had the funds to bring his imagination to life, and the show throbbed with a soundtrack created by Jeremy Healy (ex-Haysi Fantayzee), who has mixed John’s music through the decades, including the latest Margiela offering. For *The Ludic Game*, John was lost in the medieval era, his fabrics appearing like fields seen from the clouds above. Amanda Harlech (at the time still known by her maiden name, Amanda Grieve) had tied garments up with bits of string and garlanded the revelers with hats trimmed with flotsam and jetsam. Every character had a part, and they would appear, then reappear: It was glorious chaos. One of them hurled a fish at the audience—Suzy Menkes, then the doyenne of *The Times*, caught it in her lap.

A few years later, John had moved to Paris, where he’d lived on friends’ floors and eaten tinned baked beans, but his clothes were now exquisitely made. After showing some transportingly beautiful collections, though, his financial backers had shied away, and John was without the wherewithal to continue. With three weeks to go before curtain-up, *Vogue*’s André Leon Talley stepped in and insisted that John simply *had* to show, and, before long, the socialite São Schlumberger surrendered her ravishing Left Bank Louis Seize palace, the girls (Naomi, Linda, Kate) all flocked to do the show for nothing, and John was crafting genius out of a single fabric—a black crepe that was matte on one side, shining bright on the other. The girls and their Julien d’Ys hair sculptures were visions of perfection,

as John’s 18 looks stunned us all. The following season—for spring 1995, in Paris’s Pin Up Studios—he brought us ’50s suits with cinched waists, pencil skirts, and craftily pleated collars. A season later, amongst the rooftops of an imagined Paris, he set the snow falling on a collection of dramatic opera coats and evening dresses cut to fall around the body, flowers unfurling over the form as they did.

It was different in January, of course, but it was in the same spirit, with its raggle-taggle mob of people playing their parts, their bodies caught in the perfect twist, their clothes—black lace swirled up to exaggerated proportions, the gentle thud of the train of an embroidered skirt—captured in the half-light; Gwendoline Christie in a cinched corset of blue-and-white cotton, veiled in a ’50s plastic *whoosh*, her face bewitchingly transformed by Pat McGrath.

It was all something completely, indescribably magic. □

A SENSE OF OCCASION

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Anderson for Loewe, that is sown—in the agricultural sense—with grass seed. With time, the grass grows, creating a lush green pelt. At first, Bolton wanted to bring in a live coat, but it would have required an elaborate array of irrigation and growing lamps. So an already-grown version, now dead as the California hills in summer, will be shown, with a time-lapse video of grass sprouting nearby. Another of Anderson’s contributions to the show, an outfit centered on a large re-creation of an anthurium, will be part of the garden galleries—making it more of an object than it ever was on the runway. “I love when clothing becomes sculptural,” he explains. “You look at the form, in three dimensions, and see how it interacts with the body.” Loewe is a sponsor of the exhibition, and Anderson notes that the show’s capacity to bring out a garment’s physical qualities this way struck him as part of its appeal. “When you’re taking things out of an archive, reexamining them, and trying to find newness or storytelling within something old,” he says, “how do you engage new audiences and at the same time not *overexplain* something?”

The greatest of the show’s technological moments, meanwhile, is also the most daring. An exquisite wedding dress worn in the 1930s by Jazz Age New York socialite and actress Natalie Potter will be brought to life with an interactive interface specially designed

for the show by OpenAI. “The Met team provided us with a lot of source documents, facts, and materials about Natalie, her life, and her dress,” Isa Fulford, an OpenAI technician, explains. “We gave the model custom instructions about how to interact with the attendees in the style and tone of Natalie’s voice, and then we gave the model access to all of these facts about her life, dress, wedding, and so on.” Visitors will be able to text “Natalie” and get back specific answers. “I wanted to have an example of a garment that is actively responding to your engagement with it,” Bolton explains. “Something I find a little bit frustrating in any show is how passive the objects are.”

Here in the exhibition halls, motion sets the mood. Shaping the physical space for so sensual an exhibition was a daunting enough task that Bolton looked to Leong Leong, an architecture firm of two brothers based in New York’s Chinatown. Rather than traditional galleries, Leong Leong envisaged a single snaking hallway widening into a series of round, domed rooms, like pearls strung on a necklace—a series of immersive spaces. “The design of the exhibition is episodic: You progress from one room to another,” Dominic Leong explains. Many rooms center on glass cases reminiscent of bell jars, an icon of scientific objectivity. The sleeping beauties, meanwhile, will lie flat in cases throughout the exhibition,

surrounded by frosted glass for a ghostly, holographic air.

On arriving at the show, visitors will first see a Brancusi bronze placed into dialogue with the Worth sleeping beauty. A contemporary garment that the Worth dress helped to inspire—an Alessandro Michele piece for Gucci—will be displayed nearby. Visitors will progress into a space filled with botanicals on painted silk—a Chinese technique imitated by Europeans in the 18th century and updated by Mary Katrantzou, whose garment is nearby. A small room that follows will be devoted to warp printing, a technique with a beautiful out-of-focus effect on patterning and images, echoed by a lenticular hologram.

From there, Bolton says one morning in the museum, rushing around with growing excitement, the exhibition blooms into its naturalistic themes. A room devoted to touch features a Miss Dior dress created by Raf Simons in 2013, with a touchable scale model. Next comes the Van Gogh room, centered on a Saint Laurent jacket inspired by the artist’s painting of irises, put into dialogue with Rodarte’s dress inspired by Van Gogh’s sunflowers, and the poppy room, centering on Isaac Mizrahi’s bleeding poppy dress, inspired by the work of Irving Penn. The poppies lead to daisies embroidered on an intricate 18th-century French court suit; the daisies lead to Spitalfields silks, shown with a projection of the original

botanical watercolors on which they were modeled; the Spitalfields lead on to tulips, roses, and what Bolton calls a “garden room.”

And on it goes, through dresses of Chinese silk as yellow as the sun; a surprisingly wide selection of beetle-related fashion, including early-plastic necklaces by Schiaparelli; and a room of snake style, animated with terrifying videos. As Bolton elaborates the immersive world of cutting-edge technology he is building to recover the lost experiences of the past, he is seemingly impressed less by the ambitious scale of the exhibition than by the possibilities of future work that it has opened up. “It’s a very humbling show to work on,” he says. “It makes you realize how little you are.” □

ELIZABETH DEBICKI

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probably best known among TV sophisticates for the 2016 adaptation of John le Carré’s *The Night Manager*. Debicki is fond of self-deprecating jokes about being below-radar (a lifelong reader, she’s always loved fictional characters no one wants to talk about, “which is also the title of my career!”). But Debicki as Diana was an uncanny tour de force that was much seen, much written about, celebrated, and still exerts an afterglow. Maybe a hangover too: “The degree of vulnerability for me doing the role was immense...immense,” she tells me. Because she wasn’t inventing

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a backstory but reckoning with history and facts—and with public opinion. “Here’s this whole *life*,” she says.

Even at the table read, “she had the character completely,” says costar Dominic West. “I was very much at sea with Charles. I hadn’t quite got a handle on it. And she had the voice. She had everything.” She also had Diana’s humor. “That was the thing that struck me most,” he adds. “How funny she could be.” *Hugs, we all need them*, one of Diana’s earliest public utterances (or close enough), became Debicki’s catchphrase, a go-to bit of on-set levity.

Debicki knows that she is not cut out for the life of a royal. There’s her propensity to withdraw; there’s also a kind of counterbalancing wanderlust. “I have this insatiable desire to sort of live everywhere, which is absolutely terrible,” she says. London is her base, a new flat, she tells me, where she hosts dinner parties for friends: “I’ve been teaching myself to be a better cook.” Her other anecdotes place her in Los Angeles, Brooklyn, and Australia, where she visits annually to see her mother and father and two younger siblings. “It’s really hard to live away from them. When you’re 20 the distance just bounces off of you. But now I miss my family terribly all the time.” Her parents were professional ballet dancers—and Debicki herself trained in dance until she was 18. “My body has a memory of once being an extremely fit person,” she says. Her height marked her out to coaches, but she was hopeless:

“The basketball team in high school asked me to help intimidate the other side. And then they would bench me for the whole game.” She loved books instead (*Wide Sargasso Sea*, by Jean Rhys, was an early favorite) and limited her coursework to literature and humanities, which was hell when exams came round: “I’d be practice-writing 12 essays a night.” Sports are still a nonstarter. She likes Pilates and “a walk in the park” for exercise—but in free time she devours novels when she doesn’t have a pile of scripts to get through. Recently she picked up Shirley Jackson’s 1962 classic thriller, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. “Devastating.”

The gothic sensibility of Jackson neatly brings us around to her next film. After *The Crown*, “I needed to do something very different,” she says, and the role she jumped at was in *MaXXXine*, the third in a loose horror trilogy written and directed by Ti West, following *X* and *Pearl* (each starring Mia Goth as a murderous lunatic). *MaXXXine*, out July 5, is shrouded in secrecy, but Debicki confirms it’s set in 1980s Hollywood and that she plays a director, Elizabeth Bender. West had watched nearly everything she’d done (excepting *The Crown*, he tells me) and sent her the script as a kind of Hail Mary. It was a compliment not lost on Debicki. “Would you like to play an ’80s film director with massive leather shoulder pads?” she says. “Yes. I’ve never felt so seen in my life.”

“The movie sort of hinges on you taking her character seriously and being a little bit afraid of her, but also liking her,” says West. “That’s a really small bull’s-eye to hit. I didn’t know if we’d be able to get her—but she jumped at it. And she’s so iconic in the role.”

There is more on the horizon. She’s due to film *Andorra*, an adaptation of the 1997 Peter Cameron novel, with the Italian director Giuseppe Capotondi (who cast her in his 2019 art world indie, *The Burnt Orange Heresy*), with Bobby Cannavale and Ruth Wilson—“I would watch Ruth Wilson read the phone book,” Debicki says. Most exciting is a return to the New York stage. She’s done theater before, notably a production of Jean Genet’s *The Maids*, with Cate Blanchett and Isabelle Huppert, off-Broadway a decade ago, and, in 2016, a David Hare play, *The Red Barn*, staged in London’s West End.

The new project is another play, and she won’t say more except that she’s producing it herself out of a feeling that she “really, really needed to do some theater stuff again,” she says. Theater—unlike acceptance speeches—puts her inside a ring of safety. “These very strong boundaries,” she says. “You spend four or five weeks in rehearsals carving out a path. It’s like, here are the hedges, here and here, and in that space you can bounce around and really go deep and explore.” She smiles and it’s as if the Globes moment never happened. “The joy I get onstage is just *profound*.” □

Blazer and sweater; marni.com. **176:** Earring; debeers.com. Rings; select Tiffany & Co. boutiques. Bracelet; pomellato.com. Hoodie; balenciaga.com. **177:** Earring; dior.com. Necklaces: davidyurman.com; homer.com; Chrome Hearts, NYC; and select Tiffany & Co. boutiques. Blazer; wooyoungmi.com. **178–179:** On Noordhoff; Earring; select Tiffany & Co. boutiques. Necklace;

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Last Look



Erdem shoes

The blend of doughty practicality and heady glamour espoused by one Deborah “Debo” Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire, was on Erdem Moralioglu’s mind for spring 2024. (Among the socialite and memoirist’s greatest pleasures: reading, shooting, and tending a teeming flock of chickens at Chatsworth.) Erdem’s raw-edged satin kitten heels capture that spirit too: comfortable, charming—and, yes, just a *little bit* decadent.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY AMBER PINKERTON

Last Look



Chanel necklace

The origins of Coco Chanel's obsession with camellias range from the nostalgic (a formative performance of Alexandre Dumas's *La Dame aux Camélias* starring Sarah Bernhardt) to the romantic (a bouquet of them brandished by one Arthur "Boy" Capel, Coco's great love). However they came into the maison's fold, a gleaming choker with the motif at its center can't help but inspire instant—and persisting—devotion of its own.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SAM GREGG

SET DESIGN: ALICE ANDREWS



Willy Chavarria hat

“We wanted to avoid quiet luxury at all costs,” Willy Chavarria said in September of his spring 2024 menswear collection, presented amid the gilded splendors of the Woolworth Building in Lower Manhattan. This flamboyant felt ranchero hat, which topped off the show’s opening look (a louche white suit with a truly enormous rose boutonniere and exaggerated wide-leg trousers), simply underscores his point.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SARFO EMMANUEL ANNOR

Last Look



Balmain shoes

While the name of Balmain's Eden Flower heels references a vision of beatific paradise, in silhouette the shoes evoke the winged heels of Hermes—or perhaps the story of Hephaestus, god of artisans, fire, and metallurgy. (The slingbacks' intricate uppers are wrought from leather and mirror.) Whatever heaven they fell from, they seem well-poised to blaze a flickering trail straight through the summer.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ILYES GRIYEB



Alexander McQueen earring

For her triumphant final outing as creative director of Alexander McQueen, Sarah Burton looked to four key sources for inspiration: a woman's anatomy, Queen Elizabeth I, the blood-red Tudor rose, and artist Magdalena Abakanowicz. The rose in particular appeared in many enchanting iterations across the collection—including on this dramatic golden earring, which hangs like a pendant from the ear. Putting the petal to the metal never seemed so exquisite.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DELALI AYIVI

Last Look



Loewe bag

One foolproof way to make an already-coveted bag even more irresistible? Dress it up as ripe summer fruit! Loewe's Squeeze bag—easily identified by its ruched body, “squeezy” handle, and adjustable chain (to convert it from a shoulder bag to a crossbody to a swiny little handbag)—comes in a multiplicity of sizes and colorways. Covered in tactile beaded leather, however, it's a chic snack.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PEYTON FULFORD



Polestar 3





EVERY HERO NEEDS AN ALLY

On screen, heroes come in all shapes and sizes. Yet they walk a similar path. One that promises to be tough. One that may cause them to waver and doubt, but will provide them with all the tools they need to weather any storm and best every rival. Allies of the rarest kind that will instill confidence and help them reach their mark. And if this tale feels so familiar, it may be because the screen is but a mirror, revealing the hero in all of us.

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