







### VALENTINO GARAVANI



- JANET -

by Wendi Miyake Los Angeles, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 Janet Mock #ValentinoEmpathy



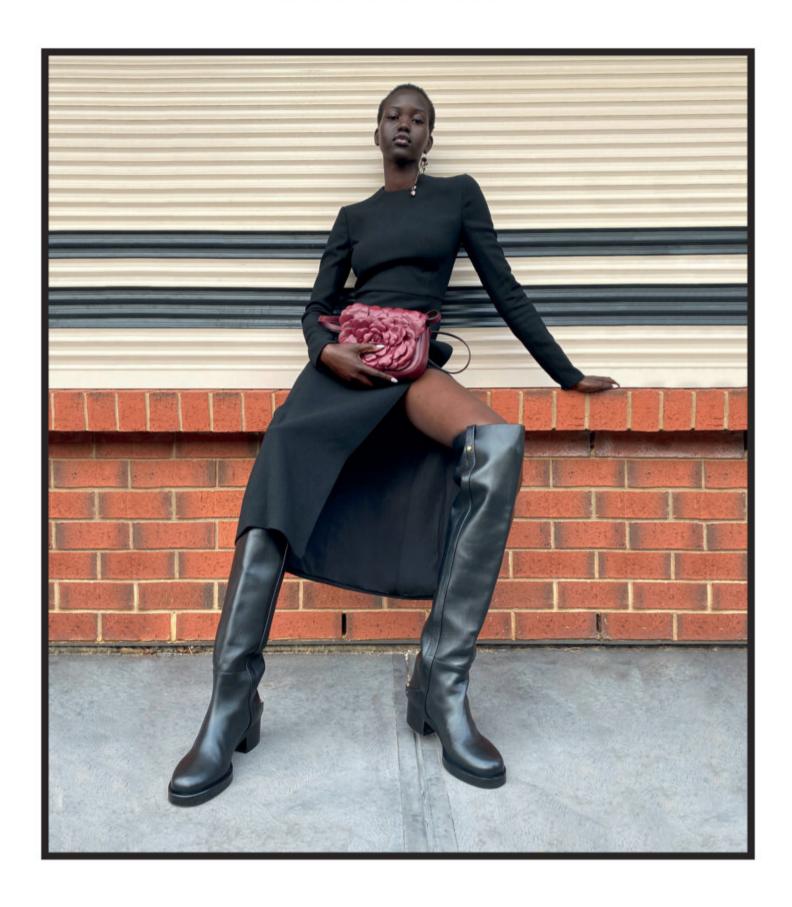








### VALENTINO GARAVANI



- ADUT -

Adut Akech by Josephine Achan Sydney, June 11<sup>th</sup> 2020

#ValentinoEmpathy



### ITEM FEATURED IN AUCTION:

VANITY BRACELET SAFFIANO LEATHER AND METAL AUTHOR: MIUCCIA PRADA



ORIGINAL PIECES FROM THE PRADA FW2020 FASHION SHOWS IN MILAN WILL BE AUCTIONED IN OCTOBER.

Sotheby's 25



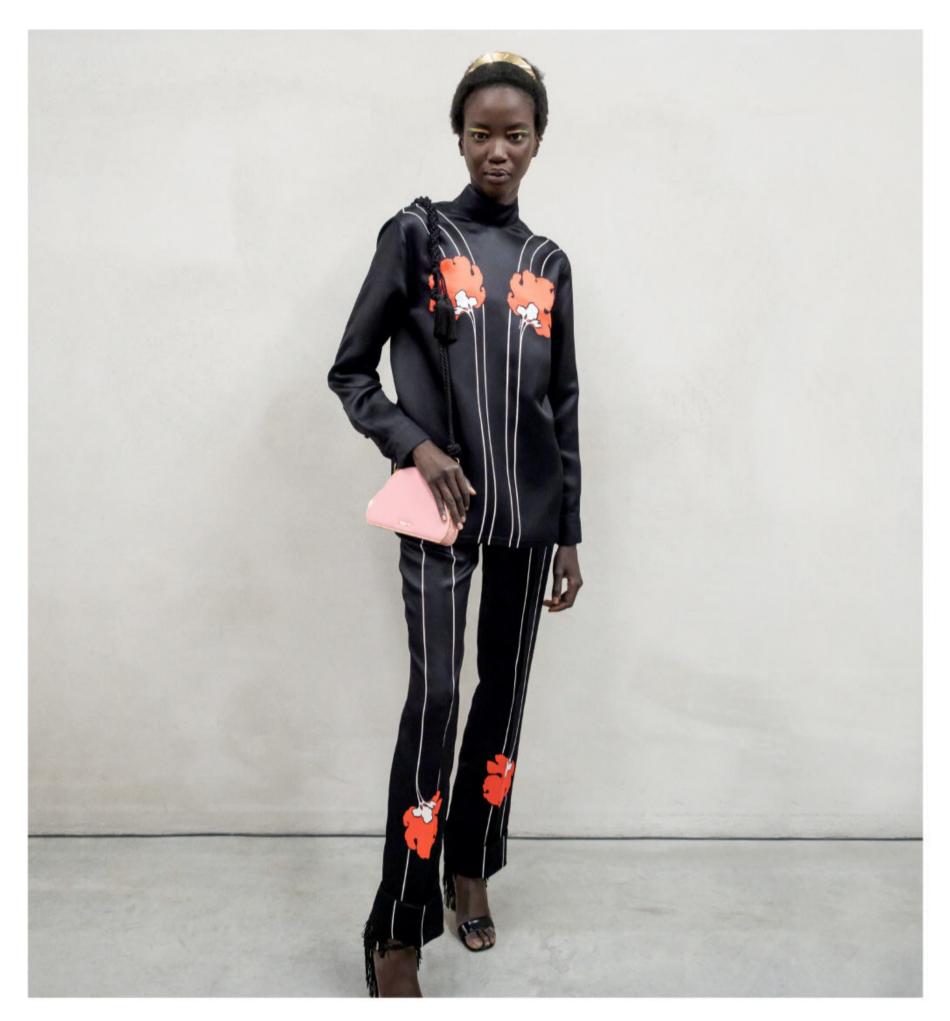


### ITEM FEATURED IN AUCTION:

PEONY PRINT SILK PYJAMAS, ECLIPSE BAG, METAL HEADBAND, OPEN-TOE HIGH HEEL SANDALS

WORN BY ANOK YAI

AUTHOR: MIUCCIA PRADA



# PRADA.COM/AUCTION

# PRADA





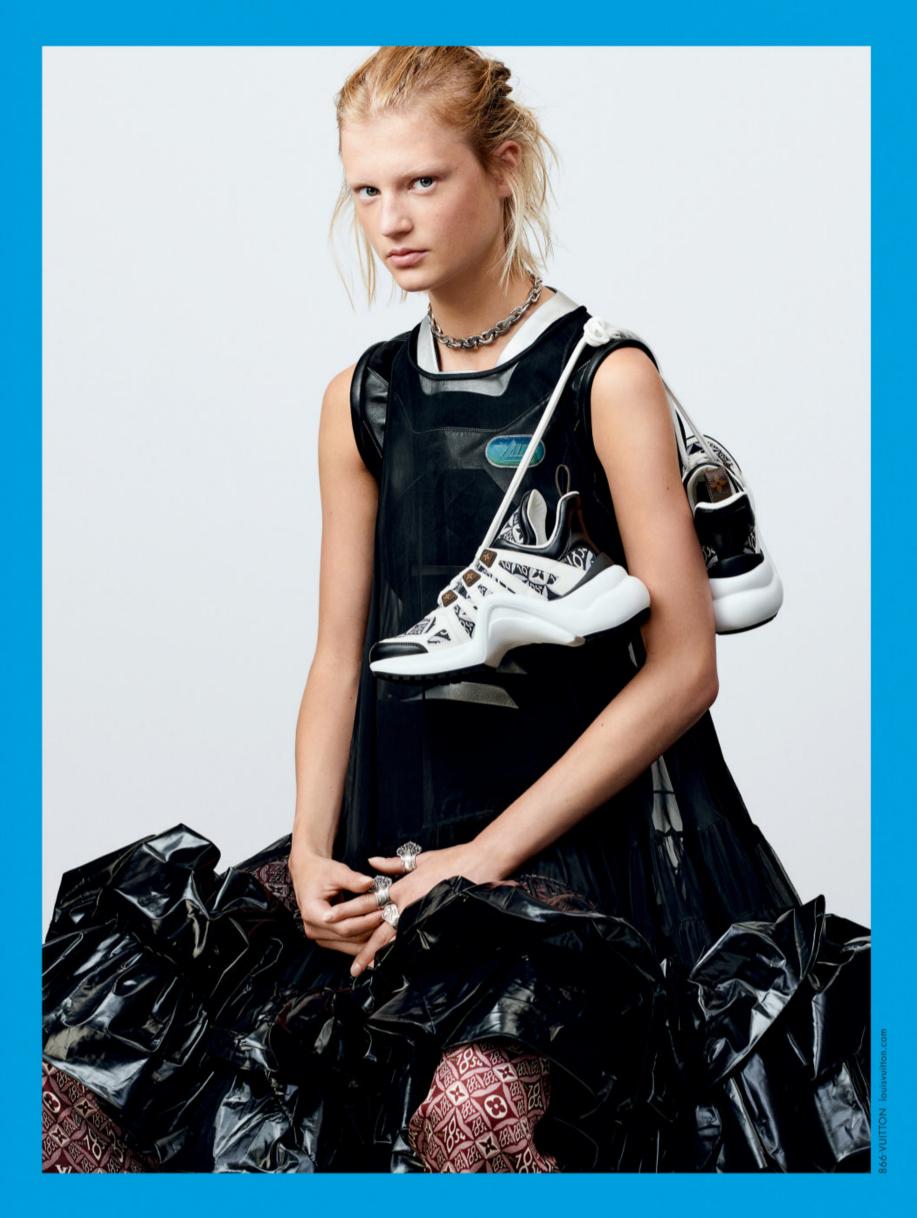


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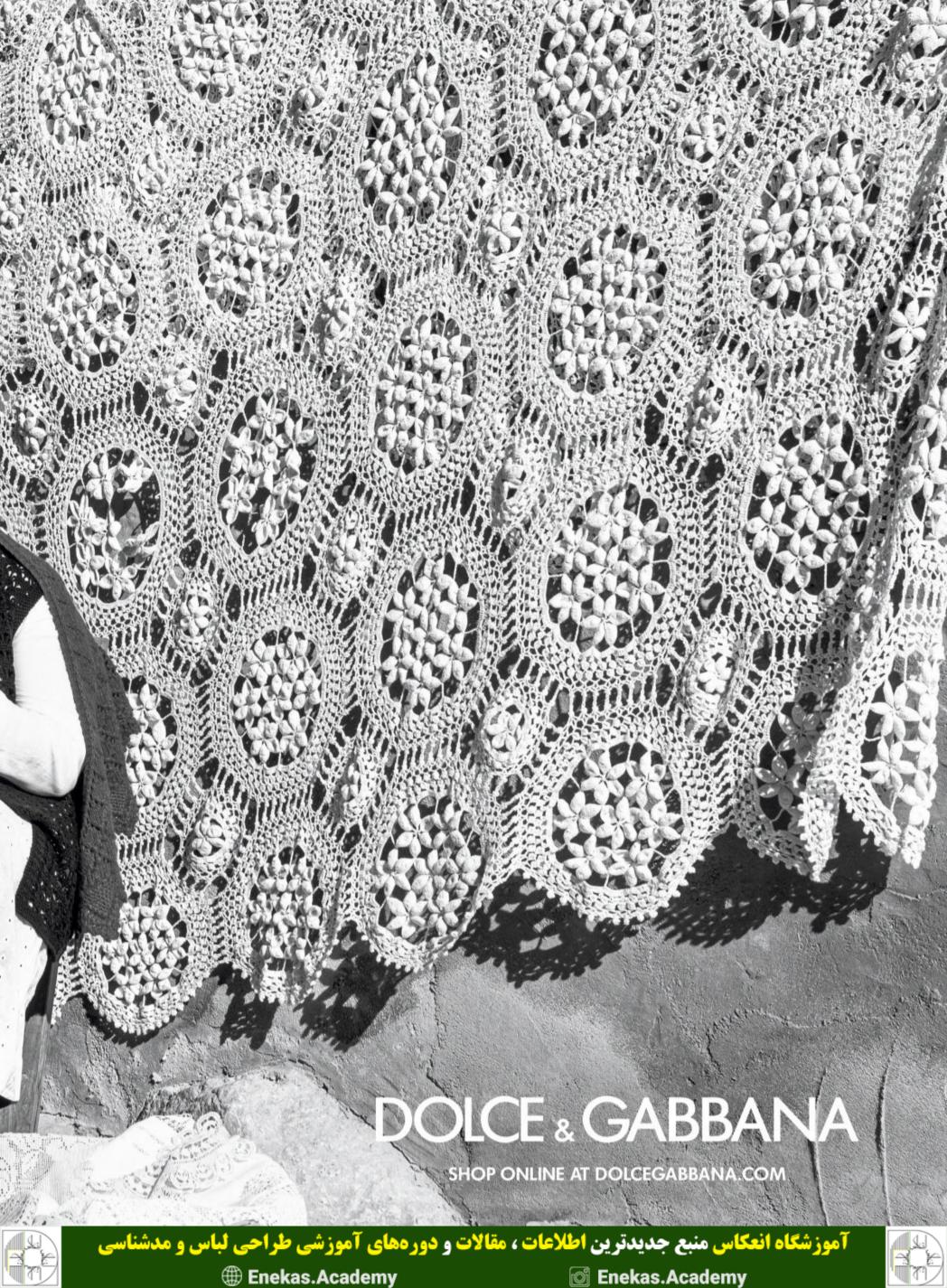






























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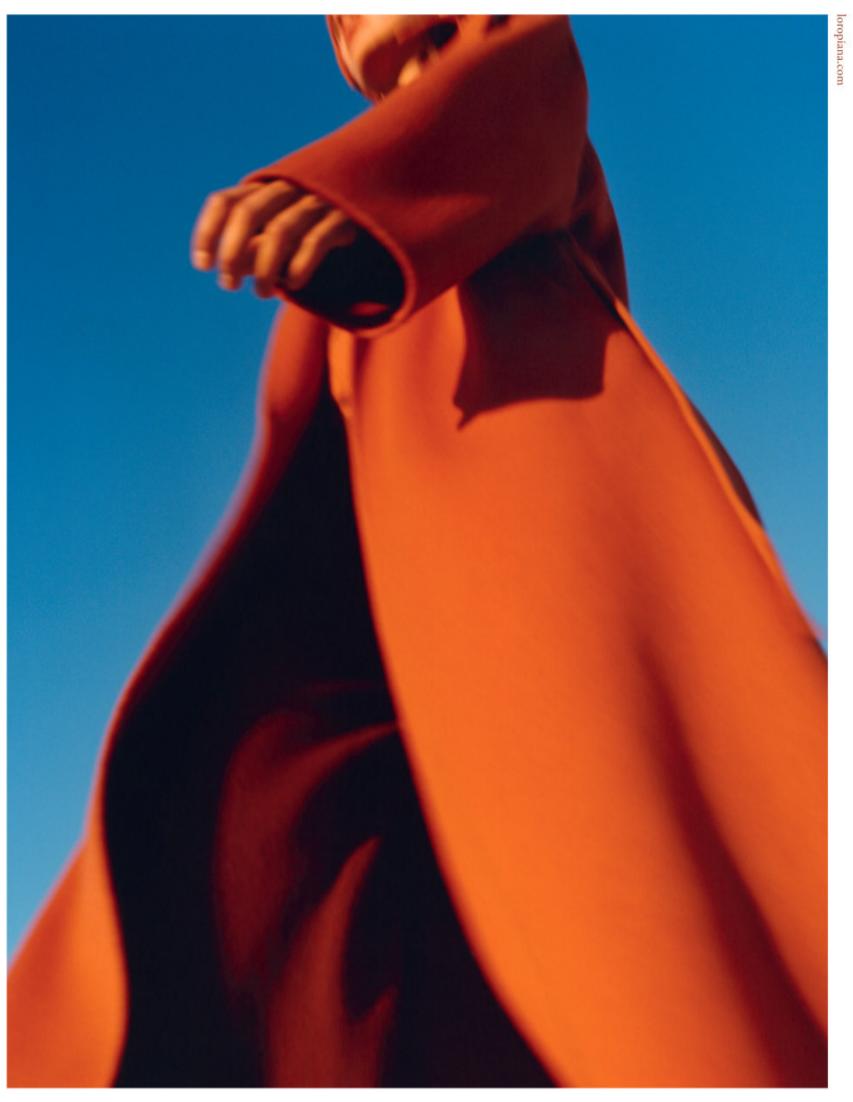


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SOMEWHERE IN LORO PIANA

## WOGLE

October 2020



40 Editor's Letter

46 Contributors

### 48 Full Bloom

Actor and new mother Jodie Turner-Smith is celebrating many fresh beginnings. By Alexis Okeowo

### 52 Reel Life

Odessa A'zion shines in Netflix's *Grand Army* 

### 54 This Woman's Work

Karen Elson revisits the highs and lows of an iconic career in fashion. By Lynn Yaeger

### Reviving Rebecca

An adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's novel reimagines its story in glorious color.

### 62 Me Time

We all want to live longer, but is a prolonged life a healthy, happy one? asks Jancee Dunn

### 66 Easy Rider

Hamish Bowles discovers a new means of getting around town CONTINUED>34

### SOMEWHERE OUT THERE

MODEL KIRSTEN OWEN WEARS DRIES VAN NOTEN. PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEX WEBB.





### RALPH LAUREN



















## **VERSACE**





## MCIE.

October 2020



### **JUST ADD WATER**

MODEL DARA ALLEN, WEARING A CHANEL TOP AND SKIRT, COOLS OFF IN THE PULITZER FOUNTAIN, NEAR FIFTH AVENUE IN MANHATTAN. DIRECTED BY BARDIA ZEINALI.

### 68 Life Studies

Martin Amis's new work is a confession—and an elegy

### 74 Work the Loom

Diedrick Brackens's textiles evoke both kente cloth and Unicorn tapestries

### 76 The New Age

Senator Kamala Harris has become a thrilling symbol of hope. By Tracy K. Smith

### 78 Cuz She Loves You

Claudia Rankine meets up—at a distance—with Lizzo, the musical sage who wants us to get through this moment together

### 86 Can Fashion Be Political?

Always—but now more than ever. By Maya Singer

## 90

Love & Protest Janaya Future Khan's activism. By Carvell Wallace

### 92

I Love New York In a tribute to the city's spirit, we dressed a few of our favorite locals

102 An American

Feast

in fall's best looks

Chef Marcus Samuelsson is putting Black food at the center of a culinary conversation. By Klancy Miller

### 104 Ring, Ring, Bling Bling

For these creatives, time at home—with pets, loved ones, and some highshine baubles—is a moment to refresh artistic energies

## 114 Clean Scheme Naomi Fry

considers what it means to visit a spa today

116 Counting on the Country Dressed in fall's rustic delights, model Kirsten Owens and her daughter, Billie Rose, show us around their blueberry farm 122 Index Ways to skip town responsibly this fall

130 Last Look

### Cover Look Taking a Stand

Musician Lizzo wears a Valentino dress. Jason of Beverly Hills earrings. Rings and bracelets by Chopard and Tiffany & Co. Manolo Blahnik shoes. To get this look, try: Double Wear Stay-in-Place Makeup in 5W1 Bronze, Pure Color Envy Sculpting Blush, Pure Color Love Cooling Highlighter in Gold Beam, Pure Color Envy Sculpting EyeShadow 5-Color Palette in Defiant Nude, Little Black Liner in Black, Sumptuous Rebel Length + Lift Mascara, and Pure Color Envy Paint-On Liquid LipColor in Controversial. All by Estée Lauder. Hair, Shelby Swain; makeup, Alexx Mayo. Details, see In This Issue. Photographer: Hype Williams. Fashion Editor: Carlos Nazario.





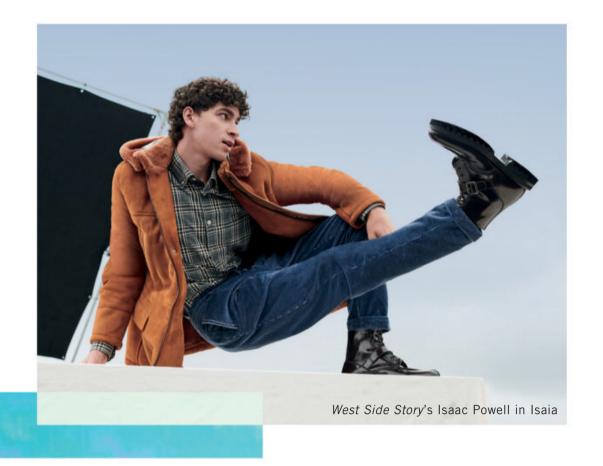


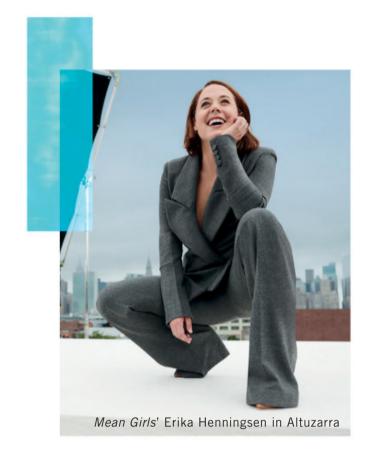
## FRUCTIS SLEEK & SHINE

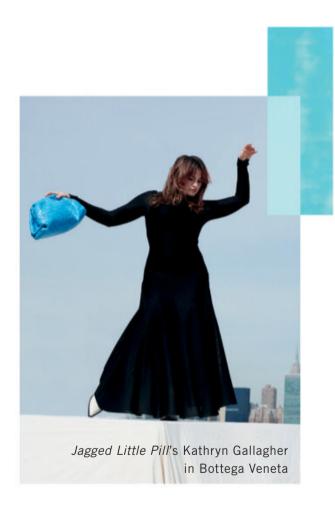


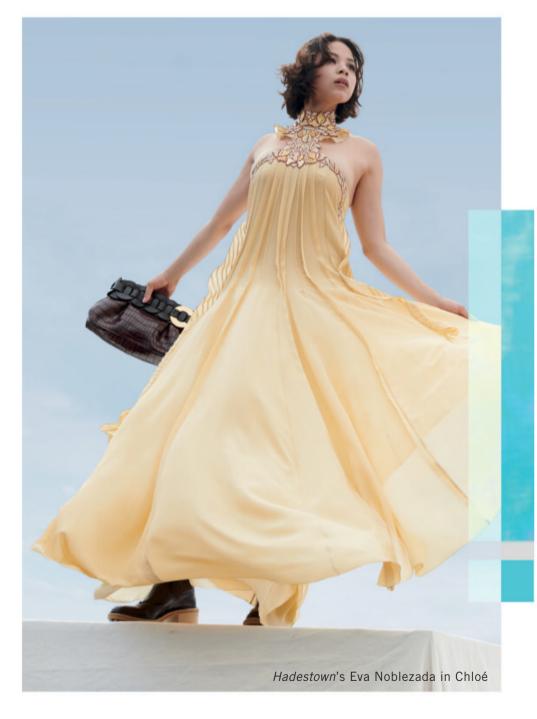












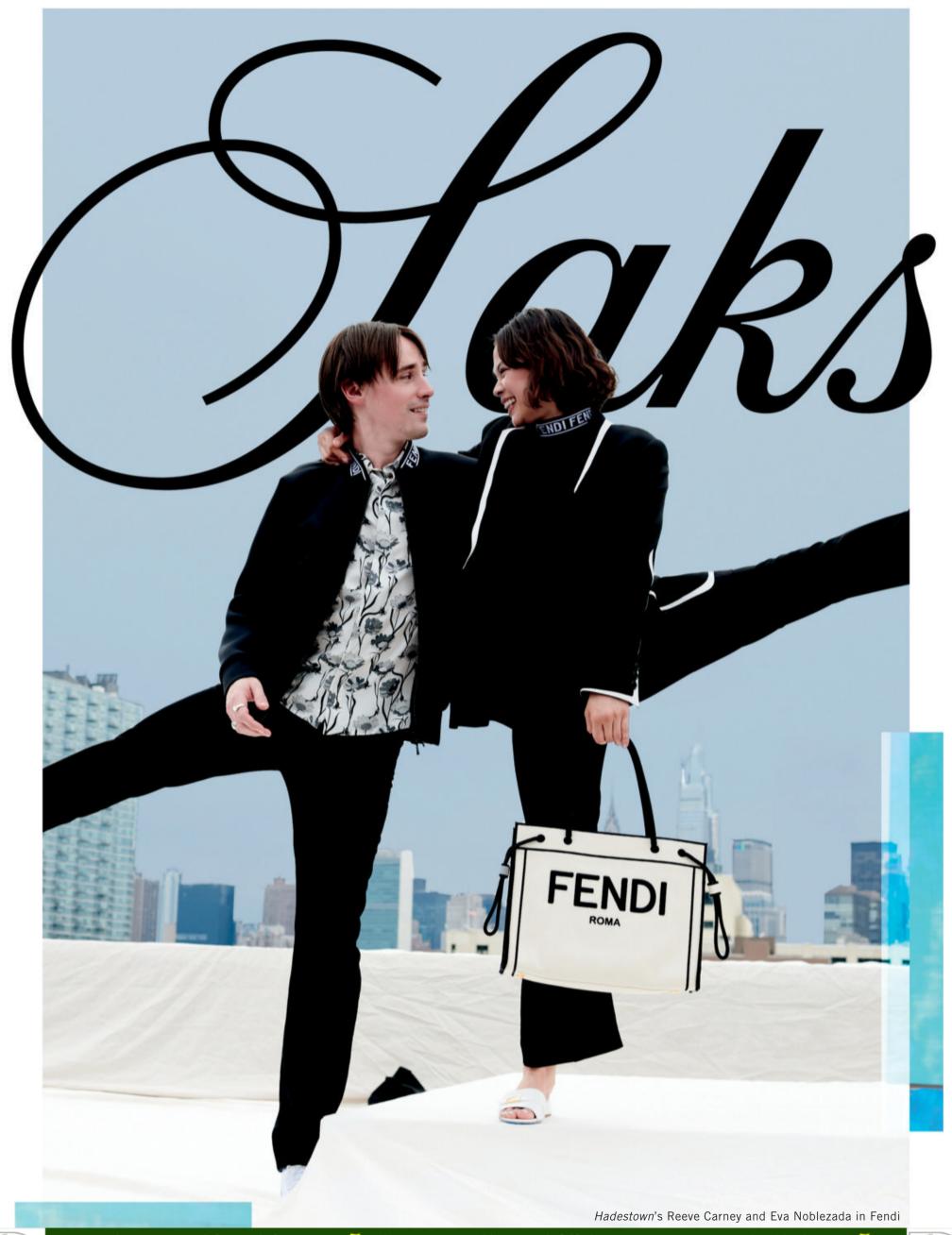
Fashion isn't clothes—it's community. To the Broadway performers who continue to make memorable moments no matter where the stage may be...

<u>Thank you for creating</u>

<mark>نعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات ، مقالات و دورههای آموزشی طراحی لباس و مد</mark>





















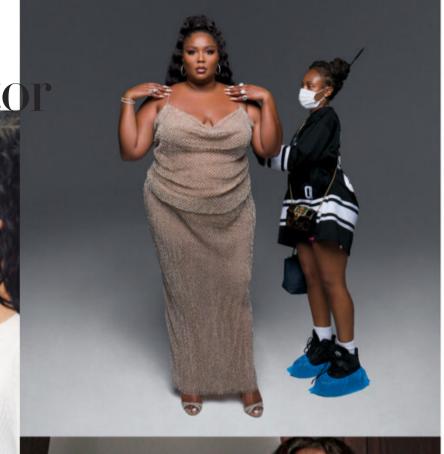
## Hope & Change

THIS IS A TIME of dramatic change—in our lives, our politics, our public health, even our sense of identity and purpose. Everywhere you look, people are resetting, rethinking, and choosing new paths—perhaps living in a new place or devoting themselves to a cause they believe in or just doing their best in a moment of tremendous economic strain. And fashion has been disrupted as never before. The question of what we choose to wear and why—the fundamental role our clothing plays in our lives—is up for debate in ways I've never seen.

Some of that debate is practical (what do we need to wear for a Zoom call, anyway?), and a lot of it is political. Amid a national uprising around social justice, in an election season where our president greets the news of Joe Biden's extraordinary running mate, Senator Kamala Harris, with racist rhetoric, everything has taken on a political cast. The message our clothing sends, which encompasses where it's made and under what conditions, matters more than ever. So, yes, fashion is political, as Maya Singer explores in her deeply reported piece on the subject this month. It has always been political, but these are historic times, and fashion is undergoing an equally historic reckoning.

Our cover subject, the singer Lizzo, is political too, effortlessly so. I love how uncompromising she is—on subjects of racial equity and feminist self-affirmation, especially—even as a spirit of joy and hope runs through her music. It is no surprise that in quarantine the force of Lizzo's personality shines through.

The Harlem-based chef Marcus Samuelsson (who recently became an adviser to Condé Nast on all things food-related and a guest editor at *Bon Appétit*) is another creative talent I've long admired. His next





### ROLE MODELS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SENATOR KAMALA HARRIS, PHOTOGRAPHED BY ZOË GHERTNER IN 2018. OUR COVER SUBJECT, LIZZO, PHOTOGRAPHED BY HYPE WILLIAMS (WITH HAIRSTYLIST SHELBY SWAIN ON SET). CHEF MARCUS SAMUELSSON WITH HIS WIFE, MAYA, AND SON, ZION.

cookbook, *The Rise*, is devoted to the influence of Black cooking on American food, a project he embarked on while reeling after the 2016 election. As he tells Klancy Miller (refusing to use Trump's name), "The shock of 45 made me ask, 'What's going to be my contribution?'"

That is a very 2020 question, I would say. And voting for the Biden-Harris ticket in November is probably the most important contribution any of us can make. It gave me such joy to see Senator Harris at the Democratic Convention. What a perfect running mate for Joe Biden (who was himself inspiring and unifying); what a vision for America's future. As Tracy K. Smith puts it in her moving tribute in this issue, with Harris one feels nothing less than "the light of a new age."

Almahitar.







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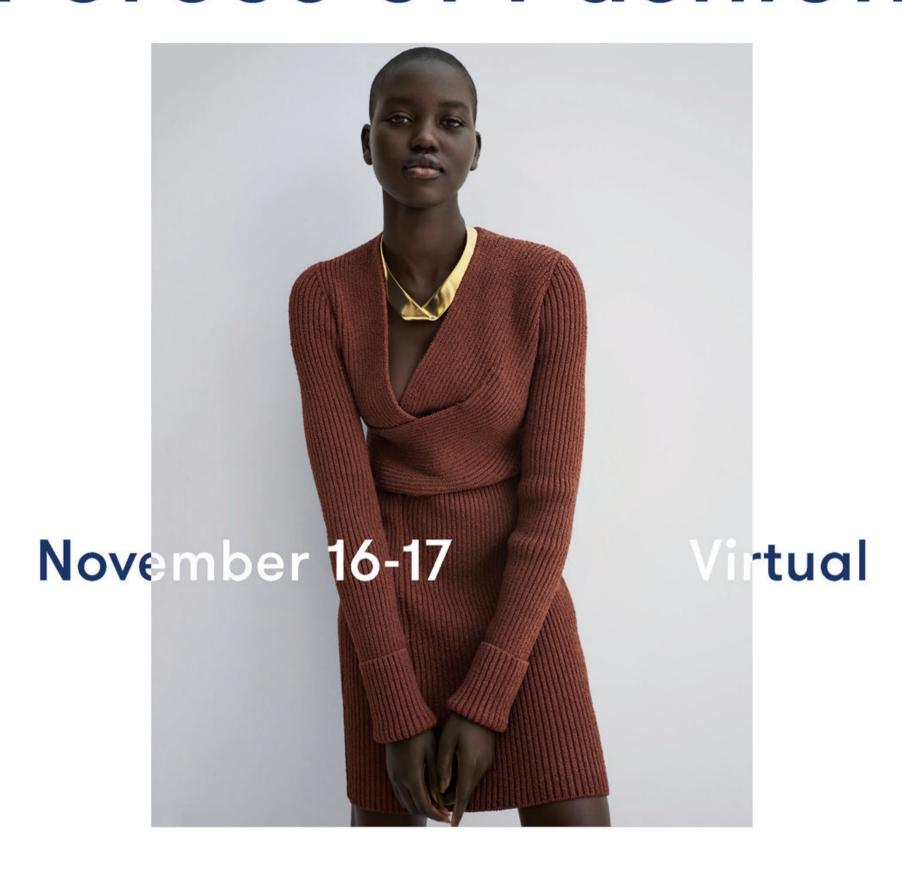


Chiara Scelsi is wearing ULTRA LE TEINT in shade B40. ©2020 CHANEL®, Inc.





## Forces of Fashion



Vogue's annual Forces of Fashion creative conference returns as a virtual experience, bringing thought-provoking conversations with some of the world's most compelling creative talents in fashion to your door. The lineup includes Lizzo, Ethan James Green, Virgil Abloh of Louis Vuitton Men and Off-White, Alber Elbaz of AZ Fashion, Jonathan Anderson of JW Anderson, and Daniel Lee of Bottega Veneta—with more names to be announced in the coming weeks. To buy tickets and see the latest updates, visit VogueForcesOfFashion.com

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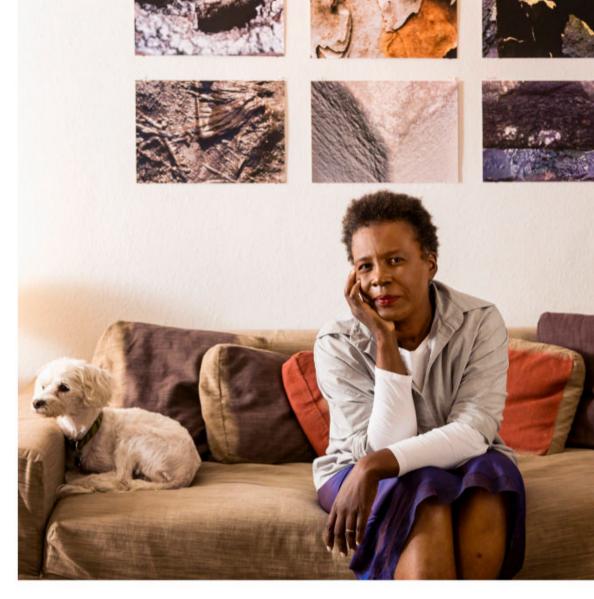




## Tracy K. Smith

A day before Joe Biden confirmed Kamala Harris as his running mate, Vogue asked former poet laureate of the United States Tracy K. Smith to write about the vice-presidential pick, "whoever that might be," she explains. Smith is speaking from Princeton, New Jersey, where she lives with her husband and "three, wild young children," and where she's gearing up for a virtual fall semester as Princeton's Chair of the Lewis Center for the Arts (as well as the November release of a collection of poems she co-translated from Chinese, Yi Lei's My Name Will Grow Wide Like a Tree). When Biden announced Harris as his pick, Smith's assignment took on new significance. "I could write about what I actually have been thinking and feeling," she says, "about what it means, to me, to feel represented by who she is and what she values."





## Claudia Rankine

Currently based in New Haven, Connecticut, with her husband and teenage daughter, Claudia Rankine—the poet, playwright, essayist, and author of this month's cover story on Lizzo—knows well both the opportunities and the frustrations of working remotely. "Suddenly I have the ability to sit at my desk *literally* 24/7," she says, "but I find myself looking out the window." When it came to Zooming with Lizzo, however, Rankine was rapt. Virtual interviews do have their limitations—face-to-face, the writer says, you can "understand when an answer is going one way and the body is going another"—but they also afford a different kind of intimacy. To connect through the screen, Rankine says, is "like having Lizzo in your house with you."

## Klancy Miller

It was more than a decade ago that Klancy Miller first met Marcus Samuelsson, her profile subject in this issue. He invited her on a press trip to his birthplace of Ethiopia, and they became fast friends. Miller—photographed here by Kimberly M. Wang—had recently departed her job as a pastry chef in Paris (where she lived for four years while studying at Le Cordon Bleu and working in kitchens) to become a freelance food writer. Now she is preparing to release a magazine, For the Culture, whose contributors will be all Black women and femmes. "I want this to be a safe place for all Black women and nonbinary people. I want it to be a place where many stories can be told," Miller says. The first issue will include narratives about how the pandemic has transformed the food industry. Miller's own 2016 cookbook, Cooking Solo, has found new resonance (and is being reprinted) in this year of at-home culinary experimentation. In her Brooklyn kitchen, Miller has been returning to her Rustic Strawberry Shortcake for One. "I feel like even though we're in this very strange time, we should give ourselves moments of whimsy."







# HERNO



## Full Bloom

As one of the faces of Gucci's latest scent, actor and new mother Jodie Turner-Smith is celebrating many fresh beginnings. By Alexis Okeowo.



odie Turner-Smith's beauty routine, as of late, has been a little unusual. After cleansing, the British actor and model uses a dash of lavender oil, red or black lipstick—"I love when my lips are very moody and dark," she says—mascara, cheek stain, a brow pencil, and her own breast milk. "Ever since I had my baby, my current beauty secret is that I put

breast milk in all of my face serums," Turner-Smith says, laughing. "My skin is very sensitive, so I use a light cleanser, and then I put on a serum with aloe and breast milk that I literally squeeze right into my hands from my boob. I think it's the lactic acid. I've just found that the milk has been revolutionary." Only a few months after having her baby daughter, Janie, Turner-Smith is one of the

faces of Gucci's new campaign for its latest Bloom fragrance (Anjelica Huston, Florence Welch, and Susie Cave are the others). In the short film announcing the campaign, >52

### **BRANCHING OUT**

Turner-Smith, in a Gucci dress and earrings. Photographed by Ashley Pena. Fashion Editor: Yashua Simmons. Hair, Kim Kimble; makeup, Allan Avendaño. Details, see In This Issue.





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the actor wanders through a dreamy, flowered landscape—a vision from Gucci's creative director, Alessandro Michele. "I had long admired Alessandro's aesthetic: fanciful and genderless and really playful," Turner-Smith tells me from Los Angeles.

Fashion and beauty campaigns, she adds, help shape our parameters of what is considered beautiful and valuable. And they have the power to shift limiting representations of Black women. "There were so many times where I would take photos, and whoever I'm working with was like, 'Now, can you be really fierce and growl?' And it's like, 'Can I just be tender?'" she says. "White women get to be that all the time. So I loved the fact that I could be this woman who is powerful while still gentle. Can I be a carefree Black girl?!" Already a lover of essential oils, incense, and floral fragrances, she was drawn to the perfume itself: a heady blend of tuberose, jasmine, and sandalwood. "Scent really has the power to shift your mood, to calm you, to excite you," she says. "That's something that's always been very important to me."

The lockdown in Los Angeles has been an unexpected blessing for Turner-Smith, who broke out in a starring role in last year's Queen & Slim, and her husband, the actor Joshua Jackson. After giving birth in April, she's used quarantine to recover (she recounted her nearly four-day labor in a much-read essay for British Vogue) and spend uninterrupted time with Janie. "I had to learn how to breastfeed and how to be a mum—it really worked out for my baby," she says. Turner-Smith's mother ended up staying with them for three months during the lockdown, and having her and Jackson at home was a "comfort" from the chaos outside. "It doesn't make sense that we still have to be screaming to the world that our lives matter. It doesn't make sense that Black people are being senselessly mowed down by the police," Turner-Smith goes on. "It doesn't make sense, this country's response to the global pandemic. It doesn't make sense that so many people are unemployed, and the government is bailing out corporations. But what did make

sense, inside of that, was the love of my family."

Turner-Smith's other routines have also changed. She is still looking for "cool mum" outfits; during her pregnancy, her style was mostly stretchy pink clothes and sneakers. And while lipstick used to be the center point of her beauty looks, she now saves it for Zoom meetings since most of it ends up on her face masks. During the long days of quarantine, she has been going on walks and recently watched all of *How to Get Away With Murder* with Jackson: "Viola could do anything, I'm just obsessed with her," she says of Viola Davis, the show's star. Turner-Smith has several film projects on the horizon herself, including Without Remorse, starring Michael B. Jordan, anticipated this fall. As she and Jackson raise Janie, she wants to teach her daughter to have confidence apart from physical beauty: "That selfassuredness is what is going to help her navigate life. It's important to impart to my daughter what is beautiful about her, and about who she comes from and where she comes from, and what is powerful about that." □



## Reel Life

Odessa Azion shines in Netflix's gritty, hyperreal new drama *Grand Army*.

n the midst of lockdown home-improvement projects, Odessa A'zion had a mishap with a hammer, and on the day that we are to speak, she has to have stitches removed. She shows me the evidence when we connect. "I had to get stitches so many times in my life—it's like nothing," the 20-year-old actor tells me from Los Angeles, where she grew up the middle of three sisters. (She started acting when she was 15 and had a regular role on the CBS sitcom Fam.) "I think I'm very accident-prone, and I also think I can do anything and that there will be no physical consequences." Hyperconfidence is a quality A'zion shares with her character in Netflix's new drama Grand Army: Joey Del Marco, an academic star reverently orbited by a trio of alpha boys, who takes a knee during the national anthem, stages a "Free the nipple" protest, and delivers a feminist riposte to a classmate's by-rote endorsement of *The Great Gatsby*. Grand Army is a high school show for the wokest generation that avoids caricature; its kids are capable of enlightenment and bigotry, supreme sensitivity and brutish callousness. The show grew out of *Slut*, a 2013 play by Katie Cappiello (also Grand Army's creator) that depicts the multilayered consequences of a sexual assault. The TV adaptation, says Cappiello, allowed her to dig deeper into Joey's character: "To work with Odessa is to witness someone doing what they've been born to do. She is a revelation."—CHLOE SCHAMA

### **ROCK STAR**

A'ZION, PHOTOGRAPHED FOR VOGUE BY RYAN McGINLEY.









## This Woman's Work

In a new book, model Karen Elson revisits the high highs and dispiriting lows of an iconic career in fashion. By Lynn Yaeger.

hen Karen Elson sat down to write her new memoir, *The Red Flame* (Rizzoli), she wanted her book to be, she says, "a little bit different." It would, of course, feature iconic images of the model-musician-activist, shot by virtually every master of late-20th-century fashion photography, but she also planned to pair these incredible pictures with an unsparingly honest text. "I wanted the narrative to give some humanity to the images," she explains. "As a model, you're often thought of as two-dimensional—you're put on a pedestal. I wanted people to understand the depth of my experience—my very *real* experience, the hard stuff." This hard stuff included her willingness to call out the harmful practices that have longed plagued the fashion business, as well as the need to fight for a more diverse, more inclusive, more ethical, more responsible industry.

Which means that the book is not just a riveting autobiography and a stunning visual retrospective: It's also a righteous call to arms. Elson, now 41, is telling me all this over the phone from her home in Nashville, where she lives with her two young teenagers, Scarlett and Henry. Our Zoom isn't working, and so, curious about her distinctive personal style, I ask her to describe what she is wearing. The answer is pure Elson: a vintage yellow flowered dress and tortoiseshell Warby Parker glasses; her scarlet bob is sporting what she calls "COVID bangs," recently freshened up but still hopelessly curly in the Tennessee summer. >58

### **FACE VALUE**

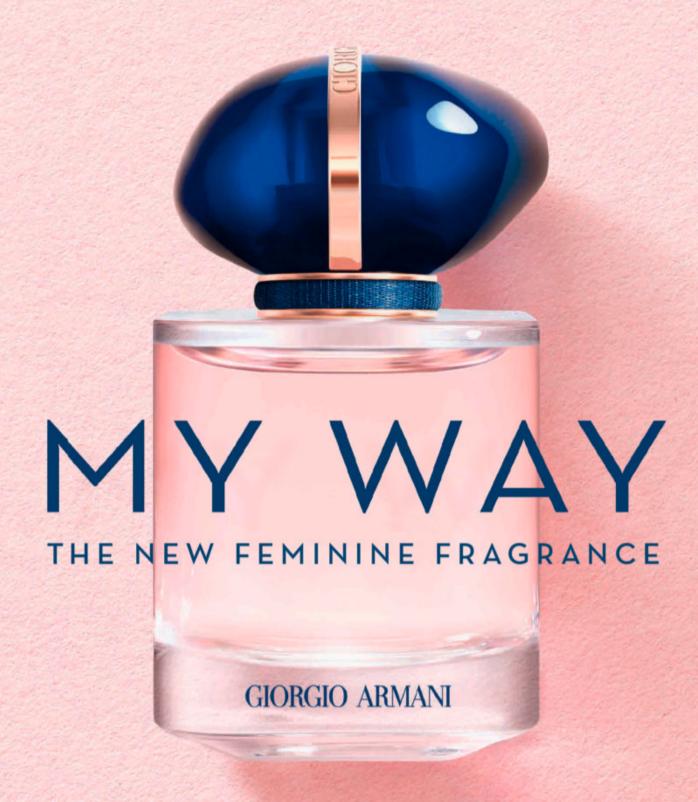
Elson made one of her earliest appearances in American Vogue at 19, photographed by Irving Penn in 1998.







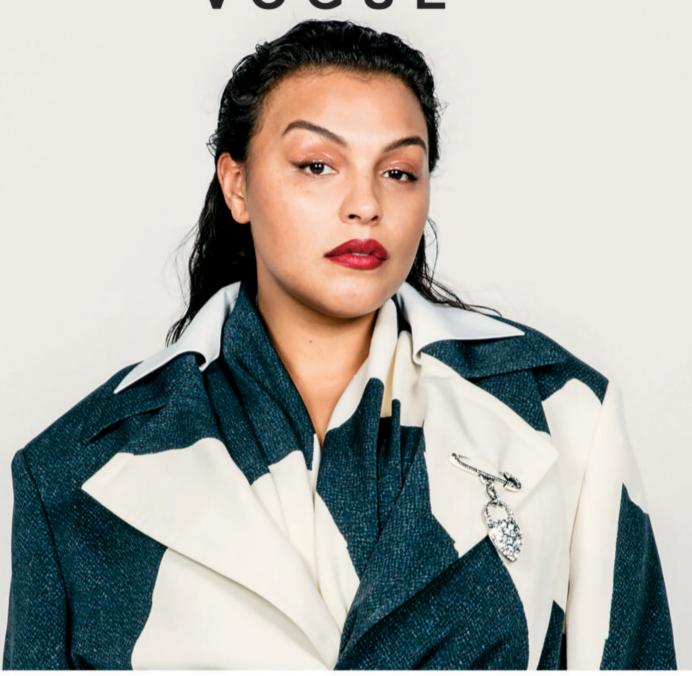
## GIORGIO ARMANI







## G O O D MORNING V O G U E



# THIS SEASON, FASHION IS WAKING UP.







Elson's bohemian aesthetic is as much her trademark as the elfin charm that made her a great model in every sense of that word—her ability to inhabit characters yet retain her essential personality has imbued even the most elegant, austere ensembles with her one-off, almost spooky glamour. In Elson's storied career she has embodied everything from an 18th-century *incroyable* to a 1940s pinup to a soigné society madame to an extraterrestrial in sequins. But it was not always a smooth road: She writes, for example, that she was often

not thin enough for the size 0 samples and was openly mocked and reviled, humiliated and tormented by an industry that could make a slender woman feel like an elephant. She still remembers the nasty eye rolls and the cruel words that stung, and she suffered decades of eating disorders attempting to conform to impossible standards. It took a lifetime, she says, but now she can almost laugh about it: "At shows, I am the girl wearing the coat!"

Her winsome protogrunge ensembles were

originally rooted in a lack of funds. Growing up in straitened circumstances in the north of England, Elson faced schoolmates who considered the world of high fashion a ridiculous dream. In the book, she recalls her first trip to Manhattan: "I vividly remember landing in New York.... I was wearing a ratty vintage coat and baby-doll dress with bright orange tights and Converse sneakers, looking like a bargain basement Technicolor Daisy Buchanan." Elson was 18 and flat broke when she got her big break—Steven Meisel shot her for *Vogue* Italia. "I gave him everything I had," she says. "We shot for two glorious hours. I had never felt more excited in my life. I left the studio to go back into the snow with only my single subway token, but I had never felt so joyful."

Meisel had persuaded her to dye her hair a brilliant shade of red; Pat McGrath turned her ivory face into

a spectacular canvas. She writes that she was dismissed in some quarters as looking like an otherworldly alien, "but I'd never felt more seen, more beautiful, and more wholly myself.... When the magazine came out—with



MODEL BEHAVIOR
FROM TOP: Photographed by Arthur Elgort,
Vogue, 2003; photographed by
Annie Leibovitz, Vogue, 2014; in Nashville

me on the cover—my career sky-rocketed, but I was also viewed by some as a circus sideshow freak."

Elson's unconventional fairy-tale punk-princess allure is perhaps one reason she is particularly sensitive to the ways in which outmoded standards of beauty have to change. And she is hopeful that the welcome shift in our current political discourse—a resurgent feminism; the #MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements—will allow young women working in the fashion industry

today to feel empowered, to find their voices. In the past, asking too many questions, sticking up for yourself, might get you labeled as a troublemaker or even cost you jobs. "People love it when you are partying all night—and the crazier you are, the more they love it," she says. "But be a good businesswoman? No." Still, she remains optimistic. "I think, finally, the tables are turning. It's really all about who gets a seat at the table. The spectrum of beauty is so varied in the normal world, and a willowy white woman

is just one person on that spectrum."

Elson is fighting not just for more room at the table but for a unified code of conduct—one that mandates a workplace that isn't toxic, that does not tolerate sexually inappropriate behavior or permit problematic language on set. "Agencies need training, casting directors need training—we need training sessions before Fashion Week. We need to show people what a safe working environment looks like."

Oddly enough, the way the COVID pandemic has forced us to reexamine what is really important has served to bolster Elson's conviction that the fashion business can transform itself. "Everything that has happened recently has made people realize how unsustainable the industry was becoming—with so many collections, we were veering toward a collective burnout. We all felt like we were running too fast to appreciate our lives,

and this tragedy has made us all slow down. Coming out of this, if we can hold on to our sense of decency and to a bigger sense of community, we can carry that care into how we approach our business."







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## Reviving Rebecca

With its vibrant, modern-feeling costumes, a new adaptation of Daphne du Maurier's Gothic novel reimagines the story in glorious color.



here's a moment in *Rebecca*—Daphne du Maurier's haunting 1938 novel—when, dressed for a costume ball at Manderley, her husband's stately ancestral home, the second Mrs. de Winter peers at herself in the mirror. In both the book and Alfred Hitchcock's noirish 1940 adaptation, her dress, copied from a painting in the house, is a white, flouncy thing finished with puffed sleeves, a sash, and a "wide floppy hat." But in a new iteration from director Ben Wheatley (*High-Rise*), the look is far more sinuous—a crimson velvet column out of a John Singer Sargent portrait.

Starring Lily James, Armie Hammer, and Kristin Scott Thomas as Mrs. Danvers, Manderley's redoubtable house-keeper, the film, which premieres this month on Netflix, offers a stylish update on du Maurier's text that begins with the clothes—all 1930s-appropriate pieces that don't actually *feel* so 1930s-appropriate. "We didn't want the period to be the main focus," says James. "Actually, I sort of forgot it was period."

James's Mrs. de Winter is less submissive than in earlier tellings: As she learns of her husband's first wife—the spectral, eponymous Rebecca—she passionately pursues the mystery of her untimely death. In that sense, Wheatley says, "the film exists in a halfway house between what she is telling us and what we're actually seeing." Moving away from the high collars and tea-length skirts of Hitchcock's version, a wardrobe of sporty knits, wide-legged pants, and easy shift dresses by costume designer Julian Day helps establish Mrs. de Winter's self-possession. (Among Day's wildly varied prior projects are Rocketman, Bohemian Rhapsody, and Diana.) "This was just on the cusp of when women started wearing trousers and their clothing was becoming less structured," says Day, who developed an aesthetic that has its most colorful expression in Monte Carlo, where James's character and Hammer's Maxim de Winter—prizelike in a dashing gold suit—first fall in love.

The effect is decidedly different at Manderley, with its shadowy rooms and starchy staff. (The imposing Hatfield House, about an hour outside London, was its stand-in for the film.) Like the narrow bodice of that striking red dress—a variation of which Rebecca had once worn herself—life at Manderley is uncompromising, with the steely Mrs. Danvers standing at its center, clinging to Rebecca's memory. (In one disquieting scene, she urges the second Mrs. de Winter to touch her predecessor's nightclothes, which had been diligently preserved.) Yet in creating her costume, Day and Scott Thomas lingered less on Mrs. Danvers's severity than on her sense of loss.

"We learn from the novel that she was Rebecca's nanny and was by her side through her teenage years, through her marriage," Scott Thomas says. "So that affection or obsession or love or whatever you call it that she has for Rebecca is extremely deeply rooted. It's passionate; it's possessive." To tell that story visually, Day landed on a wonderfully effective metaphor. "Once Rebecca had passed away, Mrs. Danvers was like a bruised person," he says. "So when you look at her blouses, all those colors represent the way a bruise changes its color—the dark purple, to the blues, to what we see at the end, when it's gone slightly ochre-y."

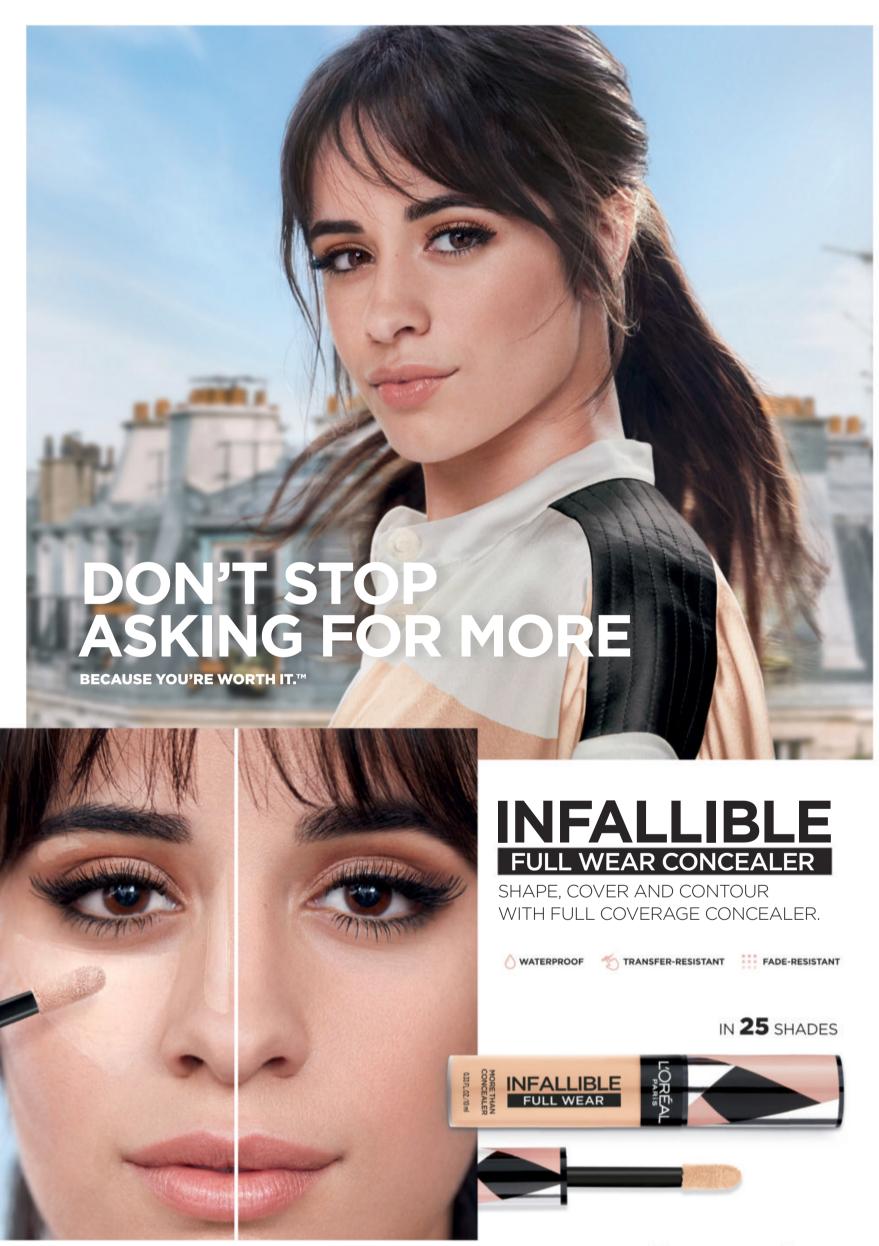
Similarly transformed by the film's finale is Mrs. de Winter. In solving the mystery of Rebecca's death and finding her footing at Manderley, she also changes the dynamic within her marriage: Now clad in her own golden suit, *she* becomes the prize. "I liked that the suits bookend the movie," Wheatley says. "It's almost like a personality that Maxim kind of packs away, and then she unpacks her own version." Ultimately, adds James, that golden ensemble "felt like a suit of armor."—MARLEY MARIUS

### FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

ABOVE, FROM LEFT: Joan Fontaine and Laurence Olivier in Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca*; Armie Hammer and Lily James as Mr. and Mrs. de Winter in the new film; James.







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## Me Time

We all want to live longer, but is a prolonged life a healthy, happy one? Jancee Dunn looks at the science that says it might be possible.

ave Asprey, founder of the supplement company Bulletproof and one of the many Silicon Valley tech titans obsessed with lengthening their life spans, famously declared he wants to live beyond 180 years. That sounds, frankly, exhausting. Yet who wouldn't want to take a languorous sip from the gerontological cup, assuming reasonable health and fitness?

Therein lies the catch: A long life is something that's desired and dreaded in equal measure. My uncle was a rocket scientist at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. When I visited him in his final years, I did not recognize this once dynamic, brilliant man. He was confused, frail, vague. In 2014, Ezekiel Emanuel, a noted oncologist and chair of the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, wrote a blunt essay for *The Atlantic* titled "Why I Hope to Die at 75." He argued that the "manic desperation to endlessly extend"

life siphons resources and "robs us of our creativity and ability to contribute to work, society, the world." Emanuel stands by it. "You don't want to wait until the end of your life and live it unconsciously," he told me recently.

But what if we could change not just the expiration date but the time leading up to it? Research shows that most people are ill with disease for five to eight years before they die. Must they be? A wave of scientists are saying no. They maintain that *aging* is a disease—one that can be targeted, treated, and perhaps even reversed. Longevity—a quest as old as humanity itself—is the wellness world's latest buzzword, appearing everywhere from specialty >64

## STREAK OF GOOD LUCK

Experts say that genetics account for only 20 percent of "health span"—the rest is exercise and lifestyle.

ABOVE: Black Scarf, 1996, by Alex Katz.







gyms such as Longevity Lab NYC to NutriDrip's \$600 "Nutriyouth" IV formula (which promises to "turn on 'good genes' ") to the Victoria Beckham-sanctioned supplements Basis NAD+. Meanwhile, big-name investors (Jeff Bezos, Peter Thiel) are backing companies that are designing drugs to stave off the impairments associated with growing old: Thiel's Breakout Labs is intent on the modest goal of "reprogramming nature." The longevity sector, according to some industry analysis, is on track to be a multi-trillion-dollar industry.

ne morning this past summer, I met Nir Barzilai, M.D., founding director of the Institute for Aging Research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, at the entrance of the three-mile pedestrian path of the Mario Cuomo Bridge, which stretches across the Hudson River. Affable and bespectacled, the 64-year-old author of the new book Age Later has suggested we exercise during our chat—exercise being one of the magic bullets for a long and vibrant life, or "health span," as he and other experts term it. (When it comes to health span, Barzilai says, genetics account for only some 20 percent. The rest is environment and lifestyle.) On this morning, he has not yet broken his 16-hour life-lengthening daily fast. Research has also shown that

"stressors" such as intermittent fasting can prompt your body to activate the genes that help repair broken DNA and protect chromosomes.

As we walk, he takes me through his other practices: Along with his fasts and exercise, Barzilai takes a daily dose of metformin. An inexpensive diabetes medication that's been around since the 1950s,

metformin is thought to mimic the calorie restriction of fasting by limiting the amount of sugar the body absorbs (side effects are generally mild, among them abdominal pain, nausea, and loss of appetite). A 2017 study of more than 41,000 male metformin users found that it reduced by a significant amount—the likelihood of dementia, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. A growing number of doctors are prescribing it off-label, but Barzilai wants the medication to be FDA-sanctioned for every elder adult. He's about to undertake a six-year national trial (called TAME, for "Targeting Aging With Metformin"), partially and anonymously funded by a noted tech billionaire.

If fasting is not exactly your speed, diet is still tremendously important. As for *what* you should eat, the gold standard remains the Mediterranean diet—one that is high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, and olive oil, and low on red meat—the only diet, says Barzilai, proven by clinical research to decrease cardiovascular mortality. A recent study in the medical journal Gut found that following it for just one year slowed the development of age-related inflammatory processes.

David Sinclair, Ph.D., Harvard geneticist and author of the bestseller Lifespan: Why We Age—and Why We Don't Have To, says the Mediterranean diet essentially "tricks the

body into thinking we've been doing exercise and fasting." Of course, this is not a permission slip for bottomless bowls of rigatoni; too much of a good thing is too much. Dan Buettner, the National Geographic Fellow who helped popularize the idea of the "blue zones"—the five areas worldwide with the longest-lived denizens—says he follows a rule practiced by the residents of Okinawa, Japan, and stops eating when his stomach is 80 percent full. And perhaps consider occasionally skipping dessert: Research shows that sugar intake accelerates age-related inflammation. "The more sugar you eat, the faster you age," says Robert Lustig, professor of pediatric endocrinology at the University of California, San Francisco. (The American Heart Association recommends that women keep it under six teaspoons per day.)

Other crucial life practices: adequate sleep and stress management. In blue zones, says Buettner, "people downshift all day long, through prayer, meditation, or just taking naps." And scientists are also coming to more fully understand the role that other people play in prolonging life. A 2019 study in the journal SSM-Population Health found that social relationships significantly increase life span in older adults. Neuroscientist Daniel Levitin, author of this year's Successful Aging, has found that friendships at age 80 are a bigger predictor of health than cholesterol

> level. Friends and even neighbors, he writes, protect your brain, while loneliness "has been implicated in just about

> But what about the factors our genome and are not often aware we might inherit some disease until we see the symp-

> every medical problem you can think of." you can't control? Most of us don't know what's lurking in

toms. That is changing, with tests that are leagues beyond 23andMe. The new Preventive Genomics Clinic at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston is the first academic clinic in the country to offer comprehensive DNA sequencing and interpretation of nearly 6,000 disease-associated genes, ranging from common cancers to the rare Fabry disease, which impairs fat breakdown in cells and affects the heart. "Roughly 20 percent of people will be carrying a variant for a rare disease, such as hereditary heart problems," says director Robert Green, M.D., medical geneticist at Brigham and Women's. Where a full panel of tests used to cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars, the clinic charges \$250 for a smaller panel and \$1,900 for full sequencing and interpretation. (These costs are not yet covered by most insurance.)

"In the near future," says Barzilai as we finish our walk, "we can be healthy and vital in our 90s and beyond." He laughs. "It may sound like science fiction, but I promise you, it's science." While I can comprehend the misgivings about prolonging life, I'll admit that I'm still programmed to crave those extra years, and will adopt what changes I can to make them more vibrant. My role model here is Gloria Steinem, now 86. "I plan to live to be 100," she once remarked. "Which I would have to do anyway, just to meet my deadlines."□

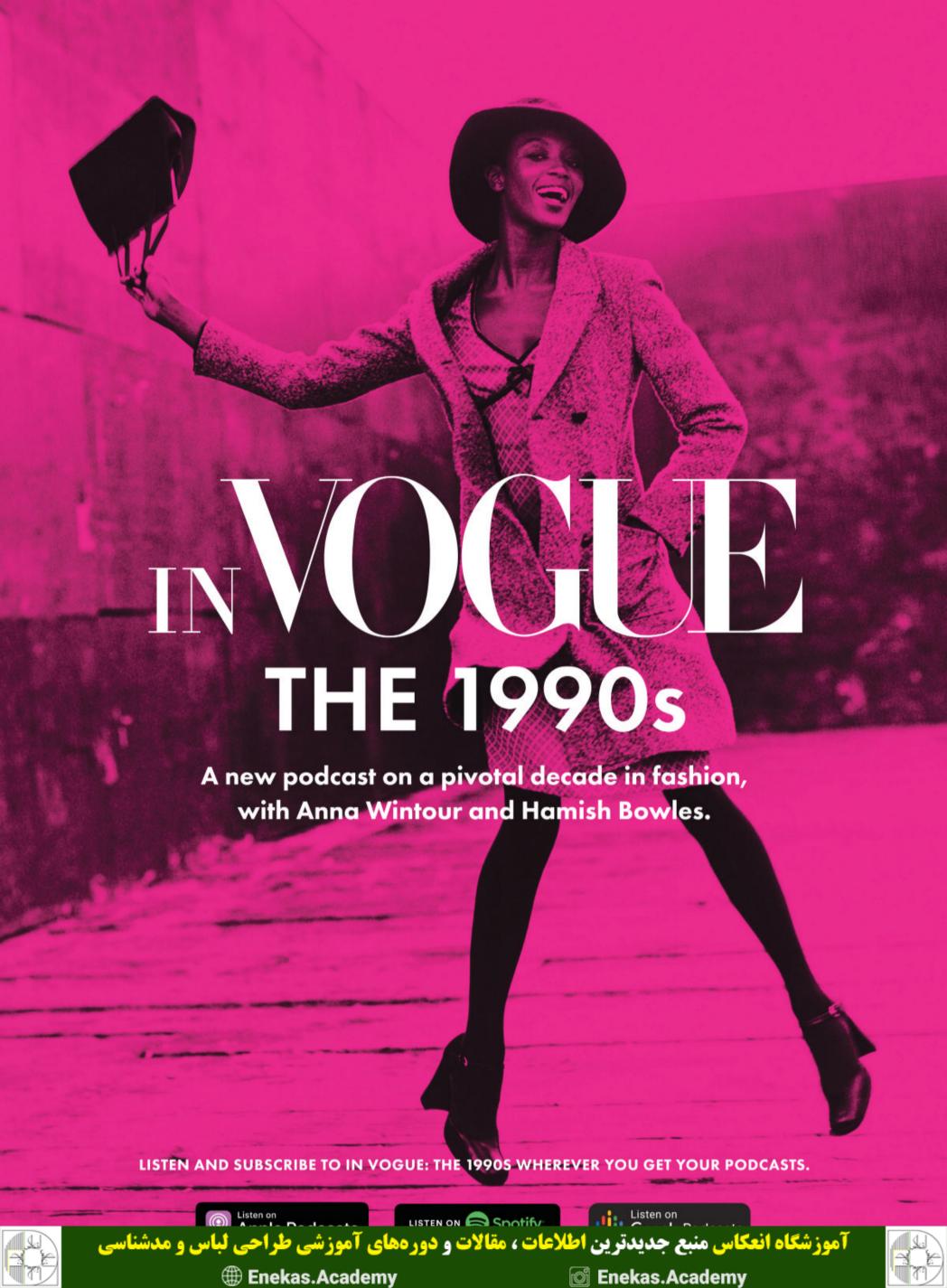




Aging can be considered a disease—one that

can be targeted, treated, and

perhaps even reversed



## Easy Rider

## After months of lockdown, Hamish Bowles discovers a new means of getting around town.

hile I was immured in my downtown apartment in the unforgettable spring of 2020, my Manhattan lullaby became an eerie, atonal symphony of birdsong, ambulance sirens, and the chilling whir of low-flying surveillance helicopters. As the days and weeks melted into months, however, I came oddly to enjoy it, to find comfort in the four square blocks of empty streets and boarded-up stores. Was it my very own Stockholm syndrome? Was I the Patty Hearst of the New York lockdown?

In the midst of it all I decided to embark on a closet edit—by which I mean the creation of mountainous heaps of clothing left for weeks to gath-

er dust and creases. In the process I came across an ensemble that I had completely forgotten: a wisteria-andchartreuse steampunk biking lewk made for me by one Nan Eastep of B. Spoke Tailor. Absolutely lovely, but would I ever wear it? I hadn't really been on a bicycle since childhood, when I learned to ride on a borrowed Chopper with handlebars high as those of a motorbike. In the years to follow, my trusty three-gear secondhand Raleigh proved a godsend. I secured my trouser legs with bicycle clips to prevent them from snagging in the oily chain and set off, with a sandwich and an apple in the front basket, to strain up the Kentish hills.

Fast-forward to the summer of 2020 and an opportunity to test-drive a trio of state-of-the-art electric bikes, a notion that seemed commensurate with the fitness levels I had sunk to in lockdown. The adventurino began with a Gogoro Eeyo 1s, known as "the



IT'S ELECTRIC!

The e-bike offers the modern flaneur a turbocharged option. Pictured here, Bowles on a VanMoof.

sports car of e-bikes" that emphasizes "agility and fun over utility." It certainly looks the part with its gleaming white Zaha Hadid-esque carbon-fiber frame, the battery ingeniously hidden in the rear-wheel hub. At a mere 26 pounds it is so streamlined that there is no room for a kickstand—let alone a basket for a sandwich and an apple. I decided that Eeyo would accompany me on my first adventure out of the city in 15 weeks: a weekend in Hamptonia. My friend Doug drove into the city to collect us both. Once there I put the bike in Eco mode, which did stalwart service through the flat fields of Bridgehampton and required only the mildest exertion on my part. Doug took his manual bike, and given our relative levels of fitness I would say we were on an even playing field. We cycled to a lake, we cycled to the sand dunes, we cycled up semiprivate lanes to gawp at the sprawling mansions, and through it all I barely broke a sweat.

Back in the city, my friend Thomas suggested a trip to the Palisades, the ribbon of dense woodland that borders the Hudson on the New Jersey side of the river. More than 100 million vehicles a year cross the George Washington Bridge, and the concrete of the bike path is literally crumbling at the edges. I couldn't cross that bridge fast enough, although apparently not fast enough for some road hogs—self-styled action figurines in their Lycra onesies who had no time for pleasantries or dawdlers. Their urgent imprecations, however, were mitigated by the oohs and ahs this bike elicits for its

futuristic good looks (which come at a price: \$4,599). For this trip I switched to sport mode: Remembering the strain of pedaling up those steep Kentish hills as a child, I found this a whole new dimension. I practically flew, delighting in the misty canopies of forest and the beauty of the Cloisters seen across the water through a veil of bright-green leaves.

I took the scenic West Side cycle route home along the Hudson and discovered a whole new Manhattan. How could I have lived in this city for so long and not known that we had our very own Seine-side promenade? On full sport mode, however, Eeyo fizzled out around the architecturally cacophonous Hudson Yards, so unfortunately I was able to consider Mr. Heatherwick's writhing copper conundrum in slow motion. Manual pedaling was no hardship in the West Village flats, but dishearteningly, when I got home after >68







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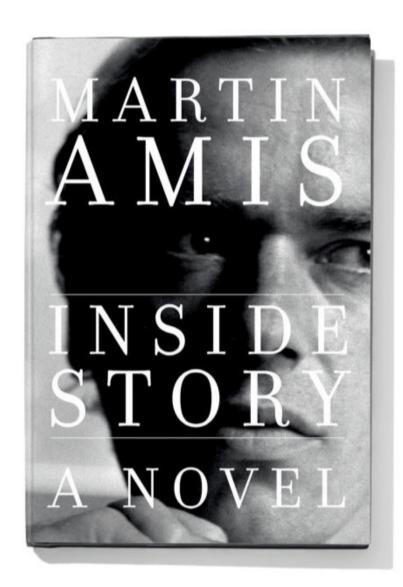
hours in the saddle, the bike told me that I had traveled .58 miles: Taiwan apparently is still working out some technical glitches.

Next ride: the pedal-assisted Van-Moof S3 (\$1,998). Before I had even left home, there were several moments of white-hot panic when, despite careful instruction from the hipsters in the Williamsburg showroom, I entirely blanked on how to unlock the bike post-charge, and a skull symbol flashed on the matrix display, accompanied by a piercing alarm: Pity the prospective bike thief. Luckily my friend Alex had arrived on a Citi Bike to help troubleshoot. I decided to try out my erstwhile office commute, to the barely remembered One World Trade Center. I seemed to be expending some effort, so we dismounted and Alex took a look. He shifted me from pedal-assist level 1 to 4 and pointed out the Turbo Boost button, and at this point my life on two wheels changed. The VanMoof glided on air, enabling me to dart across junctions, effortlessly bound up hills, and sail past sluggish fellow travelers (all I needed was a Lycra onesie). Now I could enjoy the views, and all I can say is that there must be a lot of home gyms in Manhattan. Never have I seen such bodies: joggers bounding by with what looked like armadillos strapped to their stomachs but on closer inspection turned out to be, well, their stomachs. Chastened, I moved down to pedal-assist level 1.

Up next was the Charge Comfort (\$1,499). This time Thomas borrowed the VanMoof, and by the end of the trip he had ordered one for himself. Our destination: socially distanced roof-terrace drinks in West Harlem. The British-born Charge reassuringly resembles my old Raleigh, with leather-look seat and handlebar tips. It

is practical, too: The battery pack slots under the luggage rack and can be removed to charge. We rode up Eighth Avenue past all the sidewalk restaurants that have so transformed the experience of the city, and into Central Park. At bicycle level, the park is especially beautiful, and I had never experienced its unkempt upper reaches.

I went home after dark, joining the Hudson bike path at 125th Street, where at ten o'clock the action was hopping. There were friends and families enjoying cookouts, music playing, lovers courting—it was a 21st-century Seurat come to pulsing life. Exulting in all these signs of joyous human connection, I realized that I was falling in love with my city all over again. When I arrived home, I salvaged that B. Spoke suit from the fashion-discard pyramid and hung it back in my closet.  $\Box$ 



## Life Studies

Martin Amis's maximalist new work is a confession, a tell-all, and an elegy.

artin Amis's sprawling new autobiography, billed somewhat mischievously as a novel, *Inside Story*, is a book of gloriously unchecked preoccupations: sex, Saul Bellow, literature, sex, Philip Larkin, anti-Semitism, aging, smoking, sex, Christopher Hitchens, terrorism, suicide. Did I mention sex? *Inside Story* is so twilit, so nostalgic, so frankly death-obsessed, that Amis's recollections of flirting and seduction in 1970s London are like strikes of lightning, vivid glimpses of a young writer on the make.

But they're not the only pleasures here. *Inside Story* spans more than four decades of Amis's life, from those swinging London days when Amis was a young editor at the *New Statesman* to his hospital vigil for his lifelong comrade Hitchens, who succumbed to cancer in 2011. Along the way we get...everything. His girlfriends, wives, mentors, the homes he's lived in, thoughts on craft (which can be hilariously specific: "Dialogue should be very sparely punctuated"), unforgiving assessments of Trump and Brexit (and Graham Greene and Virginia Woolf). The book is overstuffed but poignantly valedictory (Amis writes that it will be his last long work of fiction). Fans will revel in the excess and piling up of Amis's sentences, which are both wired and ruthlessly controlled. Newcomers may feel they are reading rather a lot about, say, Larkin's taste in porn.

This is a male book, a book about male appetites and male decline—but its most indelible character happens to be a woman, named (allegedly) Phoebe Phelps, whom Amis met in a London phone booth in 1976. She would become an object of lifelong desire and bedevilment, and you may not believe she exists as Amis describes her here—pneumatic, merciless, damaged, desperately vulnerable—but she owns these pages in ways you won't soon forget.—TAYLOR ANTRIM









# DIEDRICK BRACKENS. HOV 2017. WOVEN COTTON, 62

# Work the Loom

With his richly layered textiles, Diedrick Brackens summons the spirit of both kente cloth and the Unicorn tapestries.

t feels like a homecoming," Diedrick Brackens says. After a successful showing last summer at the New Museum, the Texas-born, Los Angeles-based artist's first solo New York museum exhibition, Darling Divined, comes to the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin this month opened at reduced capacity and with timed slots for patrons. "I'm excited to be able to take my family to see my work," he continues. "I mean, I think there's some

family who still don't quite know what I do."

In all fairness, Brackens's work is quite complex; his graphic, handwoven textiles—the biggest, around eight by eight feet—consider folklore, mythology, Christianity, and history through the lens of his own Blackness and queerness. "Diedrick's work is singular in its form, mindful in its every thread, and generative in its message," says Margot Norton, a curator at the New Museum. The cotton yarn that Brackens dyes by hand, sometimes using tea or bleach, is a nod to the crop's weighted history in the South; his own grandmother picked cotton as a girl. And when he works with human figures, his slim, dark silhouettes are mostly modeled

## **WONDROUS WOVEN MAGIC**

Two works from Brackens's current show, Darling Divined: TOP, how to return, 2017; RIGHT, the flame goes, 2017.





on himself. The approach, Brackens explains, presents "a vehicle to talk about people who live lives like mine." Adds Veronica Roberts, the Blanton's curator of modern and contemporary art, the works "herald the complexity of Black bodies and experiences."

They also insert Brackens into a rich tradition. Early in his practice, West African kente cloth and medieval European Unicorn tapestries were important points of reference. Later, his discovery of figures like Hannah Ryggen—a Scandi-

navian textile artist most popular between the 1930s and 1960s—clued him in to the medium's potential to speak to now. When he started, 12 years ago, "it was unusual to be weaving"—there was and still is a quaintness to the medium—"but I think the computer just was not in our lives the way that it is now," he says. To live in the coronavirus era, when many of us are forced to be even more plugged-in than usual, "heightens the experience of doing things by hand."

Increasingly, his inspiration comes from life—"like, going out into the world and seeing things and then getting curious," he says—and it leads him right back to Texas. (The region's catfish in particular are a frequent motif.) "It loves its children," Brackens says of his home state. Returning there, he reflects, "I will feel all the love that I think comes with having a connection to that place."—MARLEY MARIUS





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# THENEWAGE

Joe Biden's running mate, Senator Kamala Harris, is a symbol of hope and healing for millions of Americans. Tracy K. Smith meditates on why Harris feels like history in the making. Photographed by Zoë Ghertner.

n the months since the killing of George Floyd, I've been stirred by the many statements of L determination that have arisen out of the movement for racial justice in America. One call is for institutions and communities to do more to hear and heed the perspectives of Black people and people of color in their midst. These voices and perspectives—our voices, our perspectives—are key to harvesting the many opportunities alive within American democracy. But our nation must do the work of drawing near and listening.

When the news reached me that Senator Kamala Harris had been selected as Joe Biden's running mate, it struck me that the Democratic Party was ready to listen—and to learn. Harris's courage, brilliance, energy, and her decades of experience have long qualified her to help lead America forward out of our current national moment. And her perspective as a woman of color is critical to doing the work of helping all of us heal from the strife of racism and racial division. Knowing that Harris's voice will be central to this dialogue makes me believe that our American union can be strengthened and deepened.

As Attorney General of California, Harris secured a \$20 billion settlement for California homeowners faced with predatory lending. She created the Open Justice database, which made criminal-justice data accessible and transparent to the public. As a senator, she has held politicians to an exacting standard of accountability.

She's also shown us that leadership is not static; it requires a willingness to evolve and to meet ever-changing circumstances with the capacity to adapt and to grow. These are the capacities by which nations not only survive but become stronger, wiser, and more just. These are the capacities we need in our particular moment in human history.

But history affirms that the work of speaking up can be difficult, even dangerous. It has never been easy for Black women to lead in America. Those who have done so have endured great resistance and even great personal risk. Unfounded as they are, today's partisan attacks against Harris belong to an age-old tradition of threat and intimidation designed to silence and distort voices of truth and dissent. But I am firm in my certainty that American democracy continues to stand because of the sustaining work of Black women like Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, Kamala Harris, and the host of others who've met the demands of their time with a selfless willingness to further the project of freedom and progress.

From the upheaval and loss of the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing national movement for racial justice, it's been a year of struggle and consternation and guarded faith. But with Harris on the Democratic ticket, I feel energized. I feel emboldened to brazenly hope. I feel the thrill of community coalescing around a powerful voice calling for change. I feel the light of a new age.  $\square$ 

# LOOKING AHEAD

Senator Harris in Los Angeles, Vogue, April 2018.





### R-E-S-P-E-C-T

"I want to make music that helps. 'Cause that's the way that I help. I'm not a doctor, I'm not a lawyer, I don't work in the government. I make music." Taffeta dress by Moschino Couture.

Sylva & Cie earrings.
Rings and bracelets by Chopard and Tiffany & Co. (worn throughout).

Fashion Editor: Fashion Editor: Carlos Nazario.













n our new world, where travel is no longer advisable and social distancing mandatory, it has been a bit hard to connect with Lizzo. She has been on vocal rest in her home in Los Angeles, while I'm mostly isolated in my house on the East Coast. When a window of time finally opens, she settles in before the Zoom camera dressed casually, her sweater falling off her shoulders. She looks even more youthful than her 32 years, with her hair in two buns, reminding me of another princess, the fictional Leia from *Star Wars*. Both women took on the world and won. For Lizzo, this was not necessarily in our national script; for a Black woman it is never a given. But Lizzo's script is an updated one. As she sings in "Scuse Me": "I don't need a crown to know that I'm a queen."

This is not the first time I have encountered the singer. On my birthday last year, my teenage daughter gave me tickets to her concert at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. She knew I would be ecstatic because every morning, as I pedaled away on my stationary bike, Lizzo's music filled our home. It had been a long time since I first visited Radio

City, on a class trip to see the Rockettes. In my memory, they were a line of leggy white women kicking the air—maybe a woman of color or two was included, but they are not who I remember. This time, the Black woman onstage would leave an imprint.

As my daughter and I made our way to our seats, we passed through one of the most diverse crowds I have ever seen at a concert: queer men, older than I am, holding hands; suburban-looking women with young girls; people who drove their SUVs through the tunnels or across the bridges, judging from the license plates of the cars

blocking the streets outside. All came to see Lizzo—in gold lamé pants with THAT BITCH embroidered down each leg—probably for the same reason my daughter and I did. Her music was a part of our daily lexicon—a means of communicating a myriad of emotions at breakneck speed.

Driving home from the concert, I was struck by the sense that I had experienced something singular. Lizzo is the kind of artist who speaks to multitudes because—in an era of fake news and lying politicians and stressed-out white Americans shouting racist words at stressed-out people of color—she was committed to positivity. This despite the trolls going after her for her race, her weight, her sexuality. Anyone who could understand what it was like to be targeted felt spoken to by Lizzo. They were seen by Lizzo and were taking her lead to love themselves a little bit harder.

But when I speak to her in late summer, last year's gathering at Radio City feels very far away. Though I still do the bike in the morning and Lizzo's songs still fill our

home, we are in the middle of a global pandemic and a new civil rights movement, sparked by a police killing in a city Lizzo lived in not long ago. We are nearing 200,000 deaths from the coronavirus in the U.S., and the deaths continue to mount.

"I'm in a hot spot," she tells me, referring to Los Angeles, where she's lived since 2016. "I've been in my house every single day. I can count on my hands how many times I've actually left. I'm fortunate that I am in that position. I really had guilt about that, early on." She is acutely aware that the lockdown orders can put people in dangerous situations. "A lot of times, staying home isn't staying safe. There are so many levels to the butterfly effect of this pandemic—not just the sickness but the emotional and mental effects. That is what keeps me up at night. And that's what stresses me out."

What Lizzo has not indicated, at least initially, as one of the stresses of the moment is the killing of George Floyd by Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis, where her musical career ignited and where many of her friends and colleagues remain. Lizzo knows the streets where Chauvin

knelt on Floyd as he called out to his deceased mother. She is familiar with the places where the protests occurred. "I saw one of my friends say, you know, 'Fuckin' cop just shot another Black man. Let's all head out,' "she tells me. On Instagram, days after the killing, Lizzo wrote: "Protest is not the end of progress, it is the beginning." She received almost 300,000 likes and 3,000 comments.

Like all conscious Black people, Lizzo says she has "been brokenhearted by this country" since she was a child. "My dad taught me very early on about what being Black in this country is. When I learned

about Emmett Till, I was so young. And I have never forgotten his face." The formation of Black Lives Matter in 2013, after the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin, was a somewhat hopeful moment; BLM demonstrations seemed to signal that change could occur. But then 12-year-old Tamir Rice was murdered, and Lizzo shut down. As she describes it to me now, she was thinking, "They don't actually care. And 'they'—I don't know who 'they' are. But I know that they don't care, because if shit like this is still happening, there has to be a 'they.' They don't care about somebody's actual life." The realization in part prompted her to write "My Skin," which she released in 2015, just after the Jamar Clark shooting in Minneapolis by police officers Mark Ringgenberg and Dustin Schwarze. "I woke up in this," Lizzo sings. "I woke in my skin. I can't wash it away, so you can't take it away—my skin. Brown skin."

I have been thinking about this song lately because, for me, it speaks to the toll the violence takes against Black

"I always thought I needed at least TWO AND A HALF WHITE BOYS to make a song. One to engineer and one to produce. But now I can sit in my room and BE MY OWN ENGINEER

AND PRODUCER"











people, and because it performs the transformative achievement that Lizzo has come to stand for: The song politicizes, and in a sense weaponizes, self-love, body positivity, and sex positivity. We can't stop the shooting, we can't stop the racism, but we don't have to take part in the hatred of us: "I love you, don't you forget it, you beautiful Black masterpiece!" Lizzo sings. Here was Lizzo's first message to Minneapolis and by extension the country: "I'm done with the struggle. I just wanna enjoy my life now and maybe appreciate my skin." This enjoyment, this recognition, is for her the revolution. It's in your face. Sometimes it's a protest. Sometimes it's just feeling free. But whatever the fuck it is, it's being alive in our beautiful Black skin.

When I ask her how she's feeling now, she responds that she is allowing herself to be hopeful. But *hope*, she admits, is a scary word, "'cause I've been let down so much, you know." She's cautiously optimistic about the corporations

that seem to be taking a stand, putting their dollars to work and pledging to hire people of color, but is tempering her positivity with a healthy dose of skepticism: "Mind you, capitalism is problematic in its own way and racist in its own way." I share this skepticism: Segregationist attitudes still inform everything from redlining policies to gated communities. There is much that keeps Americans separate—even regarding their music, which brings me back to the crowd at Radio City.

When I share with her my initial surprise and delight with the diversity of her audience, she reassures me I am not the only one who feels this

way. Early in her career, Lizzo says, she was told by music-industry executives, "You can't go white to Black. But you can go from Black to white." Her response: "'Well, I'm a Black woman. So I can do just about anything I want to do.' How dare these people sit up and tell me who my music is going to appeal to or not?" In part owing to the music scene in Minneapolis—dominated by indie rock and Prince, rest in peace—Lizzo's early audiences were predominantly younger, white crowds. In 2015, she opened for Louisville rock band My Morning Jacket. "Lotta white feminists," she says of her early crowds.

Now Lizzo is the recipient not only of Grammys and Queerty awards but also NAACP Image Awards, Soul Train Music Awards, and BET Awards. "When I go hiking or whatever," Lizzo tells me, "it's Black girls being like, 'I like your music.' 'Hey, that's Lizzo.' "These Black fans confirm for Lizzo what she already knows, that she's "a Black woman making music from a Black experience"—and that her message can speak to anyone. Suddenly Lizzo's usual unflappable confidence gives way to genuine disbelief: "I never thought that I would have...I guess you could call it 'crossover appeal.' "I can't help but grin back at her.

hen I next speak to Lizzo, she's sitting down in her house, looking like a photograph from Carrie Mae Weems's Kitchen Table series. This day she's without her Princess Leia buns and

instead wearing a shimmery golden bonnet. Out beyond her patio there are pink plastic flamingos by her pool. Tomatoes and zucchini grow in the garden, rosemary and aloe plants too. There's a giant screen set up so that she can project movies onto it while floating in her pool; she's just watched Beyoncé's *Black Is King*.

At the end of last year, Lizzo moved out of her small, one-bedroom apartment into this home, which has a recording studio. The writing, she says, has been therapeutic. Previously, she jokes, she was under the impression that she needed "at least two and a half white boys to

> make a song. One to engineer and one to produce. But now I can sit in my room and be my own engineer and producer." ("She understands the basic constructs of music and the laws and theories that make you feel certain things," says Lizzo's longtime collaborator Sophia Eris.) When I ask Lizzo about a new album, she deflects: "Oh, girl, I don't know. I gotta finish the songs. It's gonna be good, though. I'll tell you that. It's gonna be motherfucking good." Atlantic Records, with which Lizzo signed in 2016, has nothing to add except that she is currently recording. (A streaming deal with Amazon Studios was announced as this story was closing.)

Despite Lizzo's celebrity, it's as if we have known each other a long time, but I know it's just Lizzo being comfortable with Lizzo that puts me at ease. Eris had warned me about this, that "people feel like they're best friends with her" very quickly. Marc Jacobs, who dressed Lizzo for the 2019 Met gala, fell in love with the singer through her music. "I knew from the start, from her energy—her smile and the fact that she hugs people," he says, "I knew that we would be able to do something really great together." He now counts her as a friend and invited her to his wedding last year.

Lizzo tells me about her childhood, and it's ordinary in the best ways. Melissa Viviane Jefferson was born in 1988 in Detroit during rush hour. Like her idol Aretha Franklin, she grew up with gospel music in the church. When she was nine, her family moved to Houston, where she took up the flute and joined the marching band. (Lizzo's now-famous flute is known affectionately as Sasha, after Beyoncé's alter ego, Sasha Fierce, and resides in a Swarovski-crystal case in her home.)

Houston was also where Lizzo began free-styling, in school and on the school bus. Band music, Destiny's Child,





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**ACTUAL CHANGE** to

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and rapper Little Flip offered Lizzo her first sense of ownership over music. "Beyoncé had a major impact on me," she says now, "as an artist, period. She is the definition of work ethic." Lizzo was also encouraged by Queen Latifah and Missy Elliot; both began as rappers—like Lizzo—and neither fit the mold of other popular female performers. They were, Lizzo explains, "women who looked like me and who were successful in the ways I wanted to be successful. I was like, 'Okay. I can be confident and look this way.' You know?"

In her senior year of high school, her family moved to Denver, but Lizzo returned to Texas to attend the University of Houston for applied music and joined the Spirit of Houston Marching Band. Halfway through her sophomore year, she left school to put herself through a kind of self-reinvention, setting aside the flute and trying to teach herself to be a singer. She joined a rock band, drank lots of whiskey and Lone Star beer, and lived in her car. (She is quick to note the difference between having to live in your car and *choosing* to live in your car. Her mother, Shari Johnson-Jefferson, and older siblings, Vanessa Jefferson and Michael Jefferson, were always available to take her in. The family now lives near her in L.A.) It was during this period, when Lizzo was 20, that her father, with whom she was very close, passed away. "I was showering at the gym, 'cause I had no house, when I got the news," she tells me. "I was in a dark place, and it was a dark thing to happen." In 2011, she decided to relocate to Minneapolis, which had been building a reputation as a hip-hop mecca since the mid-'90s.

In Minneapolis, at a block party, Lizzo met Eris, who had come to the city from Dayton, Ohio, to study business and the music business in particular; they met up again later that first night, "got drunk, and bonded over karaoke," as Eris tells it. The women quickly went on to become "like family,"

Lizzo says, forming a band called The Chalice along with another Minneapolis musician, who went by Claire de Lune. The group started to gain traction on local radio, and from there the momentum and opportunities snowballed: "We just ran with it," says Eris. When Lizzo's solo career started to take off in the mid-2010s and she began touring, she asked Eris to come with her as her DJ. "I was like, Okay, now I need to learn how to DJ," says Eris.

"It's lazy for me to just say I'm body positive at this point. It's easy. I WOULD LIKE TO BE BODY-NORMATIVE. I want to normalize my body"

"Me and Sophia—we really were in the trenches together early on," Lizzo explains, "me and her in a rental car driving through America, you know, touring at, like, dive bars." In those early years of her career, Lizzo was mainly performing, as she puts it, "rappety rap rap," and so it was important to have Eris with her: "She played the music. I don't know who else would. I couldn't afford a band."

Lizzo remembers the day, the moment, when she met her other longtime collaborator, Quinn Wilson. "Me and Sophia walked everywhere back then," Lizzo tells me. "We were walking down the street. And mind you, we had just gotten into a bar fight the night before, so we was all banged up and shit." There had been an altercation over a cell phone, and Lizzo had ended up with "a little goose egg from hitting the concrete." Wilson was pulling her car out of a parking lot but stopped to let Lizzo and Eris pass. "I literally turned to Sophia and I said, 'We need friends like that in our life,'" Lizzo says, laughing.

Eris ran into Wilson a few days later at a sneaker store and recognized her. The twosome became a threesome, with Wilson doing makeup for their shows. "I pulled some really not-so-good looks for the first couple of times," Wilson says. "And then I got it together."

"The three of us," Lizzo tells me, "have been like sisters. We have gone through so much since meeting each other. And we have always made sure that the relationship is what we prioritize. It's never been money. It's never been the career." Wilson is now the creative director for Lizzo, with a hand in all her projects, committed to, as she puts it, "translating her vision visually."

ne gets the sense that sisterhood is of utmost importance to Lizzo. I mention Missy Elliot's cameo on the track "Tempo" from her breakthrough Grammy-winning 2019 album, *Cuz I Love You*, and Lizzo says, with infectious delight,

"that was *incredible*. And to still have a relationship with her—Missy calls me, texts me, and vice versa, just to check on me. And prays for me, and I pray for her. Being little and watching her, and being like, 'Man, I want to be like that one day.' Or, 'I want to work with her one day.' I don't know what happened first. Having the thoughts because it was gonna happen? Or having the thoughts and driving myself to make it happen? But knowing that it did, yeah,

is incredible." Lizzo's music is "empowering, liberating, and fun...with a side order of ratchet sauce," Missy says. "She shows the world what strength and perseverance look like."

When I ask Lizzo who she is dating, she tells me that her five-times-platinum single "Truth Hurts" from *Cuz I Love You* is "damn near a profile on a human being minus his name," but she's reluctant to say more; "I think it's import-

ant to me as a human being to not disclose everything in my life." As much as *Cuz I Love You* is an album about men, though, it is an album about self-love. Often, in fact, Lizzo's songs don't have an object of desire besides the self.

What Aretha Franklin did with her release of "Respect" in 1967—during that decade when Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King Jr. were all assassinated—is not unlike the personal revolution Lizzo calls for with her work. Aretha's "Respect" functioned as an intervention at a historical moment, where Black women were historically invisible to everyone except themselves. Lizzo













also is committed to "keeping the torch going," in the same mode as Aretha, she says, "making sure that people understand that self is so important," especially in the midst of "this right now."

The "this right now" is the lockdown and the coronavirus but also white supremacy, sexism, homophobia, racism, and fatphobia—though she does not want her message boiled down to one of body positivity. Body positivity, Lizzo tells me, has been appropriated to a certain degree: "It's commercialized. Now, you look at the hashtag 'body positive,' and you see smaller-framed girls, curvier girls. Lotta white girls. And I feel no ways about that, because inclusivity is what my message is always about. I'm glad that this conversation is being included in the mainstream narrative. What I don't like is how the people that this term was created for are not benefiting from it. Girls with back fat, girls with bellies that hang, girls with thighs that aren't separated, that overlap. Girls with stretch marks. You know, girls who are in the 18-plus club. They need to be benefiting from...the mainstream effect of body positivity now. But with everything that goes mainstream, it gets changed. It gets—you know, it gets made acceptable." When I ask Jacobs about this, he speaks carefully: "I think what is so inspiring is the way she delivers the message," says Jacobs. "Her positivity—putting the word *body* before it is just another part of her positivity, and that's what's really contagious."

"I think it's lazy for me to just say I'm body positive at this point," Lizzo says. "It's easy. I would like to be body-normative. I want to normalize my body. And not just be like, 'Ooh, look at this cool movement. Being fat is body positive.' No, being fat is normal. I think now, I owe it to the people who started this to not just stop here. We have to make people uncomfortable again, so that we can continue to change. Change is always uncomfortable, right?"

Malcolm X famously said, "The most disrespected person in America is the Black woman. The most unprotected person in American is the Black woman. The most neglected person in America is the Black woman." He meant thin or fat, tall or short, big or small, citizen or undocumented, senator or vice president—and so I have one last question for Lizzo regarding how she feels about our Democratic vice-presidential nominee, Kamala Harris. I am thinking about the avalanche of disrespect Harris will have to negotiate as a woman and as a woman of color.

"Having a Black woman as vice president would be great," Lizzo says, "because I'm just always rooting for Black people. But I want actual change to happen...in the laws. And not just on the outside, you know? Not a temporary fix to a deep-rooted, systemic issue. A lot of times I feel like we get distracted by the veneer of things. If things appear to be better, but they're not actually better, we lose our sense of protest." She makes sure to mention Breonna Taylor and Sandra Bland and all the women who, inadvertently or not, often get dropped from the conversation: "We need to talk about the women."

For Lizzo, the American public is in an in-between time. The present protests are a conversation with a possible future, and she sees herself as having a part in making it happen: "I just want to encourage people to register to vote. That is the most important CONTINUED ON PAGE 124



# CANTASHION BEPOLITICAL?

ALWAYS—but now more than ever. As the world undergoes a radical TRANSFORMATION, Maya Singer looks at how the INDUSTRY is reckoning with MOMENTOUS and much-needed CHANGE.

here are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen." The famous Lenin quote is acutely resonant in 2020, amid a global pandemic that has killed hundreds of thousands and ongoing protests sparked by the deaths of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd and the shooting of Jacob Blake. Borders are closed, millions are unemployed, and whole industries have been decimated. Meanwhile, the strangest and perhaps most consequential presidential election in American history is upon us.

What does any of this have to do with fashion?

Everything, it turns out. Fashion is a planet-spanning \$2.5 trillion business that employed more than 1.8 million people in the United States alone before COVID-19 reached our shores. Its touch extends from the starry realm of the red carpet to sweatshops as far-flung as Bangladesh and as near as Los Angeles. By some estimates, the industry is responsible for as much as 10 percent of annual global carbon emissions. Fashion also conjures society's dreams, challenges its norms, and reflects back what it believes about itself. And yet the question persists: Can fashion be political? To which the proper reply must be: Wasn't it always? In the Middle Ages, sumptuary laws prohibited commoners from dressing above their station; during the French Revolution, sansculottes wore hardy trousers as a badge of working-class pride. Nearer our own era, the Black Panthers used clothing both to seize power and to resist it, adopting a uniform of leather jackets and berets to signify their deputization as a counter-police force while in the "Greed is good" 1980s, power suits and pouf

### **NEWS COVERAGE**

Marine Serre has always used face coverings (like this upcycled sweater from fall 2020) in her collections, evoking everything from the traditional burka to balaclavas worn by protesters worldwide—something which has provoked both praise and criticism. Illustration by Christina Zimpel.

skirts sublimated Reaganite corporate triumphalism. There are countless examples of this kind of intertwining.

"Fashion functions as a mirror to our times, so it is inherently political," notes Andrew Bolton, Wendy Yu Curator in Charge of The Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "It's been used to express patriotic, nationalistic, and propagandistic tendencies as well as complex issues related to class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality." What's radical today, Bolton goes on to point out, is the way social consciousness and environmental concerns are informing fashion: Designers worldwide, whether indie start-ups or internationally famed maisons, are incorporating politics at every level of their brands, from the fantasies spun on the runway down to the nuts and bolts of how collections are produced. These designers aren't just making clothes—alongside activists and organizers, they're making *change*. And that's a selling point.

"Every choice you make as a company will influence the world," says Marine Serre, one of the designers at the forefront of fashion's new wave. "What you make, how you make it, how you speak about what you've made—for me, everything is politics."

"I think people are getting it now: Politics isn't binary," says Virgil Abloh of Louis Vuitton and Off-White. "It's this system we're in and all the ways it manifests. There's the politics on your phone and the politics on your street. And, yeah, there's the politics of your clothes."

By "binary," Abloh is alluding to America's partisan divide, the polarization of Republican and Democrat, Fox News vs. MSNBC, that most people refer to when they talk politics. But as he notes, the partisan is only one element of the political, and "the politics of your clothes" today can mean everything from buying one of Off-White's I SUPPORT YOUNG BLACK BUSINESSES T-shirts—with proceeds this quarter going to the anti—gun violence organization Chicago CRED—to not buying much of anything at all out of a dedication to sustainability. Fashion politics





1900s: The fight for the right to vote started with the women's suffrage movement.





may mean signing the #PayUp petition launched by the organization Remake in the wake of reports that brands were stiffing factories post-COVID, leaving already vulnerable garment workers in the lurch; it can mean wearing a black gown to the Golden Globes in support of Time's Up or dressing to affirm a genderqueer identity—all of which is to say: The politics of fashion are in the eye of the beholder. But they are there, acknowledged or not.

"I'm not about screaming an opinion, but obviously my work is engaged with conversations about race, about class, about justice," explains Samuel Ross, designer of British menswear label A-Cold-Wall\*, a 2018 finalist for the prestigious LVMH Prize. "Through the look and feel of my

clothes, I'm trying to capture an experience often overlooked by fashion." Ross points to a childhood spent in part on London council estates of brutalist structures of poured concrete; in transforming that experience into something aspirational, he's affirming the dignity of poor and working-class people living in tower blocks today.

Serre, meanwhile, has the climate on her mind. She dedicates at least 50 percent of her runway collection to

upcycled clothes—creating a slick frock out of vintage Fair Isle sweaters sourced from the Netherlands, for example—and her current collection imagines new communities emerging, phoenix-like, from a burning world. It's a theme of hope and unity that's also reflected in Serre's crescent moon logo, made famous by its appearance in Beyoncé's *Black Is King*. "It's an ancient symbol—it crosses East and West; you see it in Arabic culture and in Greek. Anyone can recognize themselves in this logo—and you can appropriate it like I have, because it's totally free."

Serre's moon serves as a riposte to ethno-nationalism—if you choose to interpret it that way. The symbolism is

ambiguous by design. Martine Rose's PROMISING BRITAIN tee is more direct: Featuring a cartoon clown emerging from a circle of E.U.-flag stars, the shirt debuted as part of a spring 2020 collection Rose showed just as the U.K. was hurtling toward Brexit. "As I see it," Rose says, "fashion in the absence of opinion and argument is just...merch."

Maria Grazia Chiuri seems to agree. Seizing the reins at Dior in 2016, she opened her first show with a statement of intent, printing the title of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's essay "We Should All Be Feminists" on tees sent down the runway alongside looks that pointedly updated the aesthetic codes of a house built on the ur-femininity of founder Christian Dior's New Look. "Declaring my—and the maison's—wish to step away from the stereotype of women by

integrating feminist ideas is a way of keeping Dior's heritage relevant," Chiuri explains. "At this stage, being feminist should be the default."

Feminism, pluralism, eco- and class-consciousness: Designers such as Ross, Rose, Serre, and Chiuri are joining in crucial debates. For Virgilda Romero Vasquez, however, the intersection of fashion and politics is a matter of life and death. A mother of four who began working in L.A.

garment factories when she arrived from Guatemala 19 years ago—and who still makes only about \$300 a week—Romero Vasquez was, on July 29, impatiently awaiting the result of the California Assembly Labor Committee's vote on SB-1399, a bill that would eliminate the piece-rate payment system that allows factories in the state to pay sewers well below minimum wage. Romero Vasquez was also recovering from symptoms related to COVID and going to work in a small, airless building where, she told me, it's often too hot to wear a mask. "We had 40 people working," she says, "and seven of us got the virus, but only six came back—the other passed away." (SB-1399 also includes provisions to make





"After so many years of

fiddling around the edges of the familiar," says

Martine Rose, "it seems

like something genuinely new might come in"



1970s: The second wave of feminism, championed by activists like Gloria Steinem (NEAR LEFT, with poet Maya Angelou), empowered women to rethink how they dressed for the workplace (BELOW).



1960s: Angela Davis (LEFT) and the rise of Black Power challenged systemic racism—and the fight still goes on.



exemplified by the richesse of pouf skirts (ABOVE) and power dressing (TOP RIGHT). 1990s: Take it to the streets: ACT-UP fought for those living

1980s: The decade's "Greed is good" mantra was

> with HIV and AIDS, while grunge, the antithesis of '80s gloss, made it to the Perry Ellis runway in 1992 (RIGHT).

2000s: First Lady Michelle Obama (BELOW) led, and dressed, with purpose, inspiring women with her choices—fashion or otherwise.



SILENCE=DEATH





2010s: Design as activism, from Burberry's Pride collection of fall 2018 (ABOVE RIGHT) to the powerful documentation of Black history in Kerby Jean-Raymond's spring 2019 Pyer Moss show at Weeksville in Brooklyn (ABOVE).

brands legally liable for poor conditions in the factories they've subcontracted to make their apparel. If the concern seems remote, Romero Vasquez may prompt you to reevaluate: The factory where she previously worked produced almost exclusively for a popular fast-fashion brand with celebrity ambassadors. Meanwhile, she describes the space as rat-infested and says it's common for the rodents to urinate and defecate on the clothes. "I don't know why people think they get clean things from a dirty place," she says.)

Issues of labor exploitation in the fashion supply chain that of fast-fashion brands in particular—have languished in the shadow of glitzier conversations about what we wear and why. But just as coronavirus outbreaks in L.A. garment factories drove this summer's explosion of transmission throughout Southern California, the labor question eventually affects everything and everyone else in the industry. "How could it not?" asks Livia Firth, cofounder and creative director of the sustainability consultancy Eco-Age and a forceful advocate for a more ethical supply chain. "No matter what clothes you're wearing, someone made them. Do you know who? And how? The newest form of political fashion is to be able to tell that story."

Questions about labor are relevant whether you're asking if the pro-feminist T-shirt on a store-window mannequin was made by a woman in a sweatshop, or comparing a brand's pro-Black Lives Matter Instagram post with its record of diversity in hiring. Or if—as Chiuri did for Dior's cruise 2020 show—you answer the question by celebrating traditional artisanship, collaborating with Ivory Coastbased studio Uniwax to create expressive reinterpretations of toile de Jouy.

All of this is a necessary part of the budding movement for accountability—the raison d'être that unifies everything from eco-activist campaigns for transparency about climate impacts and waste to callouts about cultural appropriation (as when activist Céline Semaan challenged Serre on her use of Islamic imagery on burka-like face coverings) to initiatives like the 15 Percent Pledge, launched this summer by





Brother Vellies founder Aurora James to commit retailers to upping their inventory from Black-owned businesses. Talk and empty gestures just won't cut it anymore. "Give a little money, post a black square on Instagram, then back to business as usual—it started to feel like a big PR push, as though the uprising was just a temporary blip," says stylist Law Roach of the corporate solidarity statements issued amid the Black Lives Matter protests in June. "That hurt," he adds. "That hurt me a lot."

Roach, who works with such stars as Zendaya and Celine Dion, says the demand for accountability extends to celebrities and influencers. "You can't just post a photo of yourself wearing a BLM T-shirt—people are onto that; they'll be up in your comments, like, What have you *actually* done for the movement—and who made that shirt, anyway?"

"Look—posting those selfies helps normalize previously radical concepts," says Apryl Williams, assistant professor of communication and media at the University of Michigan and a fellow at Harvard's Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society. "I'm not dismissive of any of that, but I do worry that people overestimate its power. If you're not really engaged with the issues, all you're doing is performing."

The diffusion of politics into performance is, of course, an ever-present danger when fashion takes up a cause. Another is that politics itself becomes "fashionable" and thus subject to fashion's trend metabolism. "What happens when an issue becomes passé?" asks author and activist Naomi Klein, whose seminal 2000 book No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies anticipates many of the conversations about accountability reemerging now. "Inevitably, that's what happens, because what fashion wants is novelty—and what movements need is time." As Klein points out, the fight for workers' rights has been building for decades, advancing in tandem with the globalization of supply chains, and over all this time, the fundamental demand—the right to unionize—hasn't changed. "That's the game-changer," Klein says. "Workers are always their own best advocates, whether the issue is unpaid overtime or unsafe conditions. The trick," she adds, "is how do you force brands to uphold that right?"

One way to ensure that you can "tell the story" of your wardrobe, as Firth puts it, is to know who is making your clothes. A designer running an independent brand of modest size retains much more direct oversight over her operations than heads of mass-producing firms with innumerable subsidiaries and stockholders fixated on returns. She is able, as Rachel Comey proves, to align her business with her values.

A stalwart of the New York City fashion scene, Comey helped lead the way on age-, race-, and size-blind casting and has matter-of-factly endeavored to make her brand as sustainable as possible. When she wrote a detailed letter of support for Black Lives Matter this summer, one stunningly obvious point she made is that she gives her (diverse) staff paid time off to vote—and that other companies should too. "I've never thought about things like trying to reduce waste as *political*," she says. "It's more that I feel I have to be *responsible*—it's my name on the label, right?"

Though Comey's clothes and accessories are sold in more than 100 stores worldwide CONTINUED ON PAGE 124

# LOVE & PROTEST

Janaya Future Khan's activism is as politically uncompromising as it is spiritually generous. Carvell Wallace reports. Photographed by Melodie McDaniel.

here is no small talk with Janaya Future Khan, unless you count the first thing the Canadian-born, Los Angeles—based Black Lives Matter activist says to me, which is "What a time to be alive, huh?" They are climbing down a grassy hill in L.A.'s Griffith Park, an open place we've chosen to meet due to COVID restrictions, and when they look back at me, their eyes blazing intently above a light-blue medical mask, I am startled into silence.

Khan (who came by their nickname by always thinking about what might come) has arrived several minutes late to the Griffith Park Carousel, a place that factors heavily into my memories of being both a high school student and later a parent of small kids in L.A. I recall it with gaggles of children, ice cream cones falling to the hot concrete, tantrums, a 94-year-old calliope playing 94-year-old music. Now, of course, that whole thing feels like something out of a dream. The carousel is silent. Shuttered. Metal gates drawn. Fallen leaves and growing weeds. While I wait, I listen to the disconsolate calls of ravens and the rustling of trees. And I remember that, despite everything, L.A. can, in the right light, be a beautiful place.

Before this I'd known Khan mostly by their writing, their interviews, and the Sunday Sermons they began delivering live on Instagram earlier this year, which have attracted an ardent following (including Marc Jacobs, Riccardo Tisci, Rowan Blanchard, Telfar Clemens, and Zendaya). These passionate meditations on the news and racial justice but also on topics ranging from self-worth to fear of death situate Khan at the place where political action and spiritual liberation meet. Even as they argue for specific ideas such as police and prison abolition, universal health care, and student-loan forgiveness, their aim, it seems, is not just to change oppressive policies but to change the spiritual conditions from which oppression springs. As Khan said in a late-June sermon, "This is not just racial justice work, and it's not the work of being anti-racist, and it's not the work of being a movement. It's the work of being alive."

"It's absolutely mind-blowing to hear Future speak," says model and activist Adwoa Aboah from London, who met Khan as a guest on her Gurls Talk podcast. "You just feel like you're being taught something new that no one's ever told you. I'm not a religious CONTINUED ON PAGE 126







### **FUTURE VISION**

"This is not just racial justice work. This is the work of being alive," says the Black Lives Matter activist. Louis Vuitton vest and pants. Mejuri pendant necklace. Hair, Marcia Hamilton; makeup, Tasha Reiko Brown. Details, see In This Issue. Fashion Editor: Yashua Simmons.



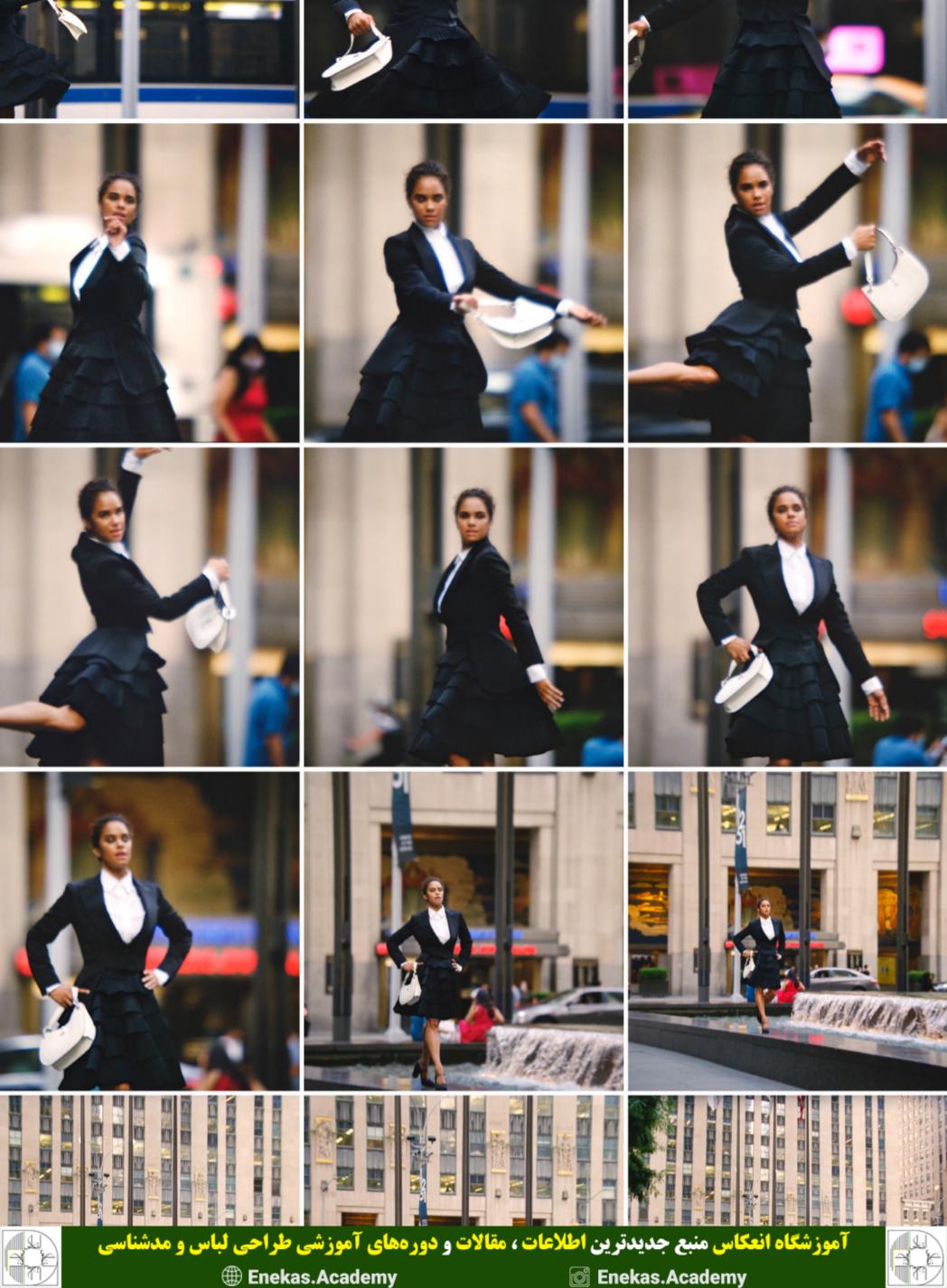




















# STATE OF THE ART

Actor Indya Moore sweeps through the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Mary and Michael Jaharis Gallery in a floor-length Oscar de la Renta dress; saksfifthavenue.com. Gucci gloves.

### ON THE TOWN

TOP: Sashaying through the Upper East Side, actor and artist Julia Fox (LEFT) and model Paloma Elsesser look very much the part of two uptown girls. Fox wears a **Dolce & Gabbana** dress, \$1,995; dolcegabbana.com. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings. Elsesser wears a **Fendi** coat and bag; fendi.com. **Miu Miu** belt. Both wear **Proenza Schouler** boots. ABOVE: Model Dara Allen (seen with her pooch, Louis) in a **Chanel** jacket, top, skirt, and sunglasses; chanel .com. **Marc Jacobs** scarf (on head). **Balenciaga** bag. **Miu Miu** clutch.



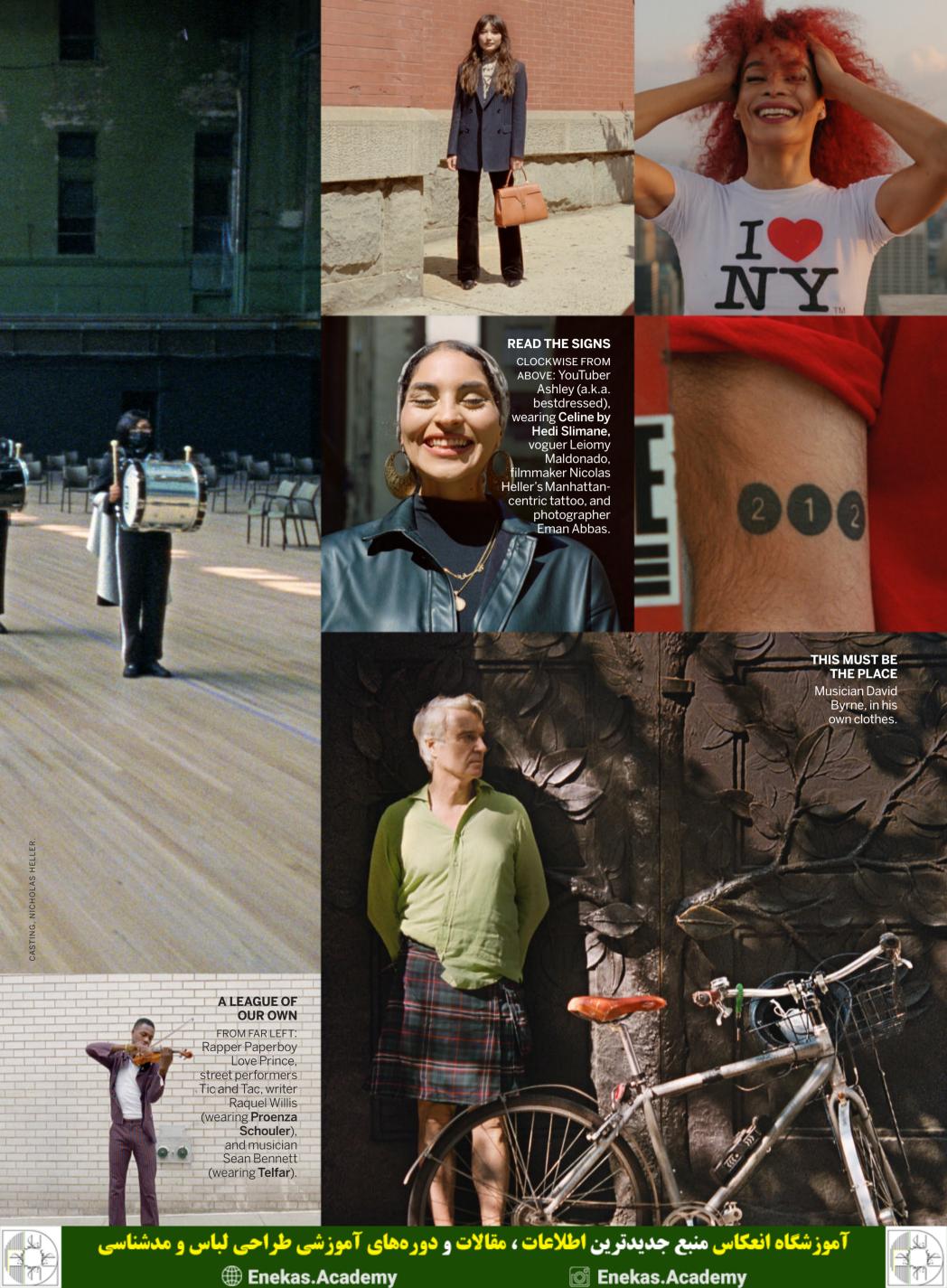


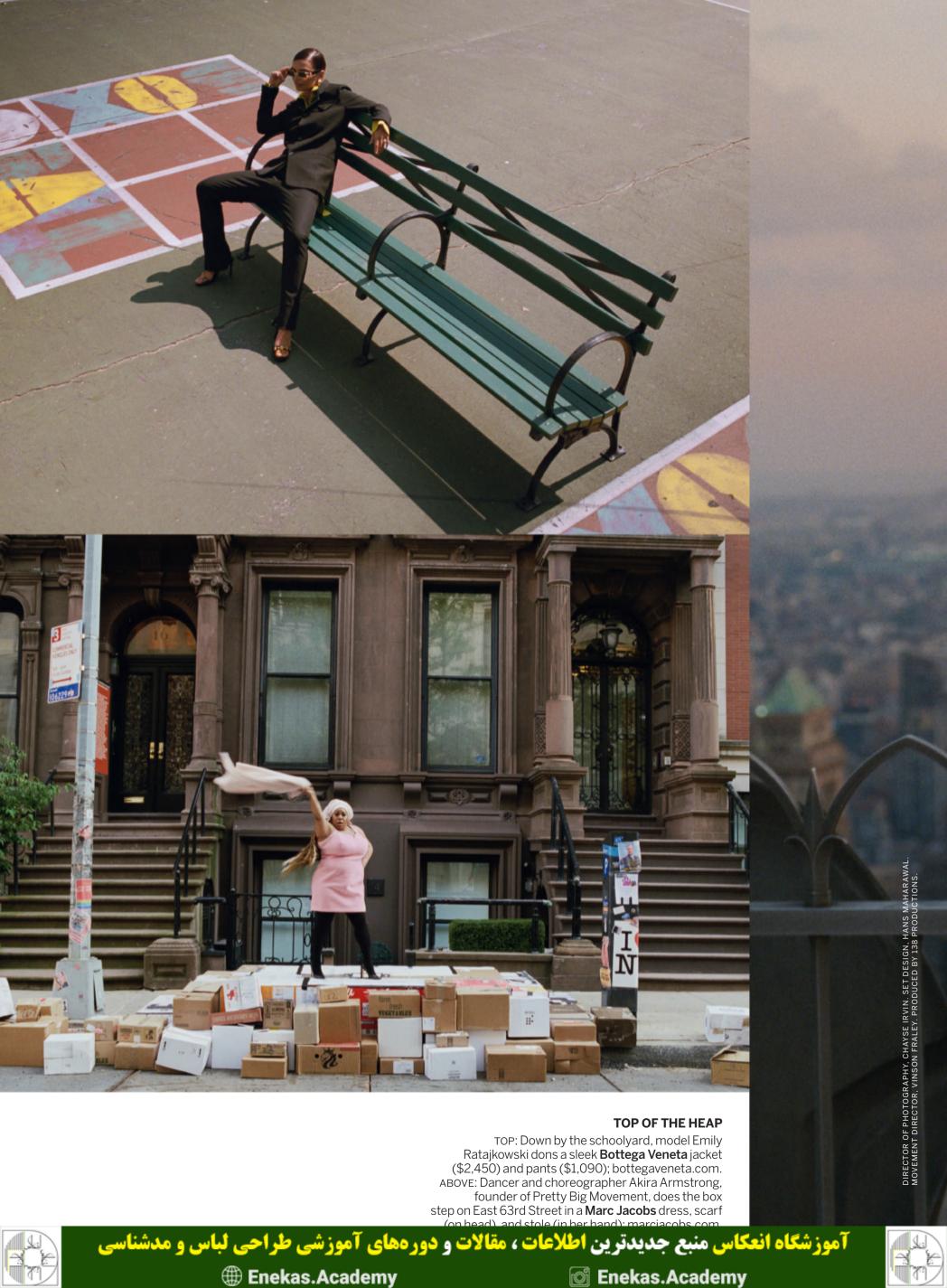














# ANGIE MOSIEF

# An American Feast

With his new book, chef Marcus Samuelsson is putting Black food at the center of a (long-overdue) culinary conversation. By Klancy Miller.

t's the last day of July, and there's a heat wave in New York City. I wake up at 7:30 a.m. to roast bell peppers and prepare my mise en place. I'm about to have a Zoom video cooking lesson with Marcus Samuelsson, chef and co-owner of Red Rooster and author of numerous cookbooks, including this month's *The Rise: Black Cooks and the Soul of American Food*.

Marcus is an old friend, and normally we would talk over a meal at Red Rooster, but we're doing a virtual meetup

because I'm in strict quarantine, and his landmark Harlem restaurant is undergoing **COVID-related renovations** (as the lockdown began last spring, it began providing meals to Harlem residents in collaboration with the hunger nonprofit World Central Kitchen). I arrive to our Zoom with oily fingers, having just peeled the last of the peppers; Marcus, meanwhile, has his ingredients neatly laid out on the restaurant's stainless-steel kitchen counter. Two assistants film him as he shows me how to pickle blueberries for Chilled Watermelon and Red Pepper Soup With Pickled Berries, one of more than 150 recipes in The Rise.

Marcus, in true pandemic fashion, is dressed casually in a baseball hat, black T-shirt, and drop-crotch sweatpants. He explains that I should bring vinegar, sugar, cardamom pods, mustard seeds, and water to a boil, and coordinates with

his assistants to figure out which angle best allows me to see his mixture bubbling on the range. He points out that the peppers and vinegar should be the first things I prepare: "Get the time-intensive things out of the way first." I proudly announce that I did my peppers in the morning. In terms of pickling the fruit, he says, it's about celebrating the season you're in—and since it's summer, "Get your berry game on."

He recalls pickling berries as a boy growing up in Sweden and then dives into talking about *The Rise*, a book he's been working on since the 2016 election. "The moment of 45 shocked me to the core," he says (he will not use President Trump's name). "I always thought Red Rooster was my

responsibility, providing jobs and connecting people. I felt like we were doing it. But the shock of 45 made me ask, 'What's going to be my contribution?' For me it felt important to document the authorship of Black cooking and how diverse it is. If it's not documented, that has consequences."

The Rise is more than a cookbook; it is a conversation, a collaboration, and, above all, a declaration that Black Food Matters. The recipes bear influences from southern cooking, West Africa, the Caribbean, and East Africa, and are

accompanied by a collection of chef profiles and essays by Samuelsson's cowriter, Osayi Endolyn. These introduce readers to figures such as the historian Jessica B. Harris, a personal hero of mine, whose work focuses on the foodways of the African diaspora; chef Mashama Bailey of The Grey, in Savannah; Michael Twitty, author of The Cooking Gene; Leah Chase, queen of Creole cooking and former chef and owner of Dooky Chase's Restaurant, in New Orleans; activist Shakirah Simley; Stephen Satterfield, cofounder of Whetstone magazine; winemaker André Hueston Mack; and chef Nina Compton of Compère Lapin in New Orleans. The Rise begins with a look to the future, exploring where Black food is heading, and then pays homage to cooks on whose shoulders Black chefs stand, and the migration stories that make the cuisine so diverse and rich.

I ask Marcus which five ingredients in the cookbook he would advise people to put in their regular rotation. "Everybody should have a jerk mix at home," he says, "a good Jamaican jerk you can rub on fish, you can rub on vegetables, you can rub on anything. A really good pickle, a southern pickle. The acid—whether it's a Haitian pickle or southern pickle, I think there's something universal about that. Grits: We learned how to have polenta at home; why can't we have grits at home? Broken rice came to us from South Carolina through slavery. The grain teff, so you can make injera, an incredible flatbread from Ethiopia."

To appreciate how Marcus is uniquely positioned to push this particular conversation CONTINUED ON PAGE 127



**DINNER IS SERVED** 

The Rise brings together more than 150 recipes, like Grilled Piri Piri Shrimp With Papaya and Watermelon Salad, ABOVE. OPPOSITE: Samuelsson at Red Rooster in Harlem.



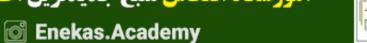






# RING, RING, BLING BLING







All dressed up with nowhere to go? These actors, musicians, and other creative types see it differently: Time at home—with pets, loved ones, and some high-shine baubles—is a moment to refresh artistic energies. Photographed (via video call) by Daniel Jackson.





Enekas.Academy



# H.E.R.

"I have my studio at home in Brooklyn, so to just create and record at any given time has been really helpful," says singer-songwriter H.E.R. "I decided to make a whole reggae EP, and I've been working with some producers through Zoom—weird at first, but now we've gotten used to it. It's tough to engineer myself, but I love a challenge."

**Loren Nicole** earrings; loren-nicole.com. **Bvlgari** rings; bulgari.com. **Balenciaga** jacket, \$1,750; balenciaga.com.







# Rachel Brosnahan

"Video calls and animals are an interesting combination," says the *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* star, whose film *The Courier* is out this month. "It was a full family effort. My husband, Jason, was hiding in the corner, holding dog treats above the computer. My puppy Winston [LEFT] got a very dapper bow tie, and Nikki [RIGHT] had a very pretty bow in her hair. Thank you for the gift of belly laughter through this bonkers photo shoot. I will treasure these photos."

Ana Khouri ear piece; anakhouri.com. Michael Kors Collection dress; michaelkors.com.











# WHATIS AVAXHOME?





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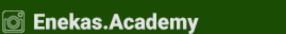


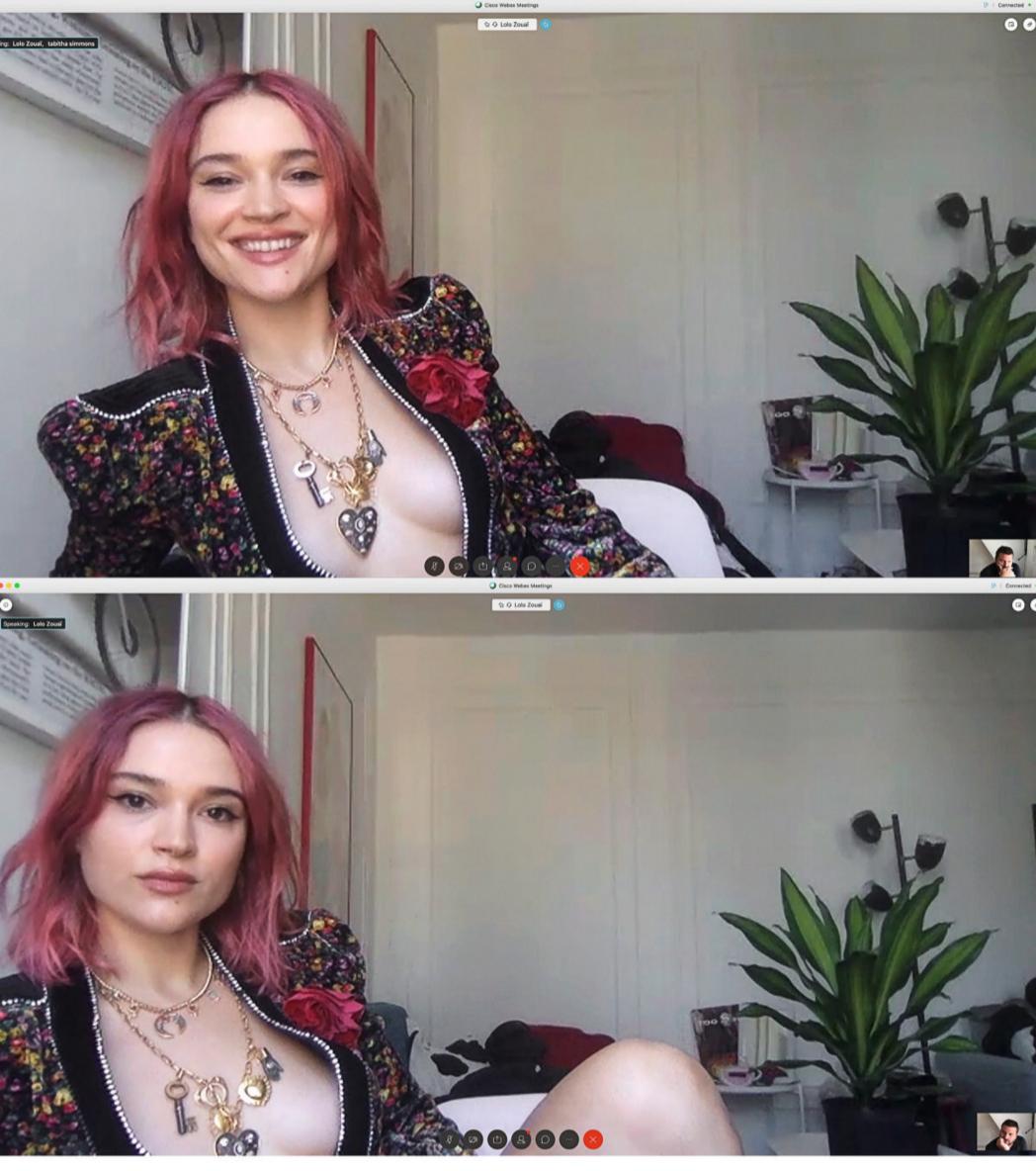


 $\label{eq:makeda-Saggau-Sackey} \textbf{``A part of my brand is helping other brands, as well as influencers, gain visibility and shape their image," says the transfer of the same of the sam$ Glamazon Diaries blogger Makeda Saggau-Sackey, pictured here with her fiancé, Thomas Rabioux. "When the quarantine happened, so many of my friends were stuck in a rut. And I was like, What do you mean you can't create content because you can't go outside? You have your house. There are so many things that you can do to be creative. You have to be scrappy."

Tiffany & Co. earrings and necklace; tiffany.com. La Ligne dress, \$395; lalignenyc.com.







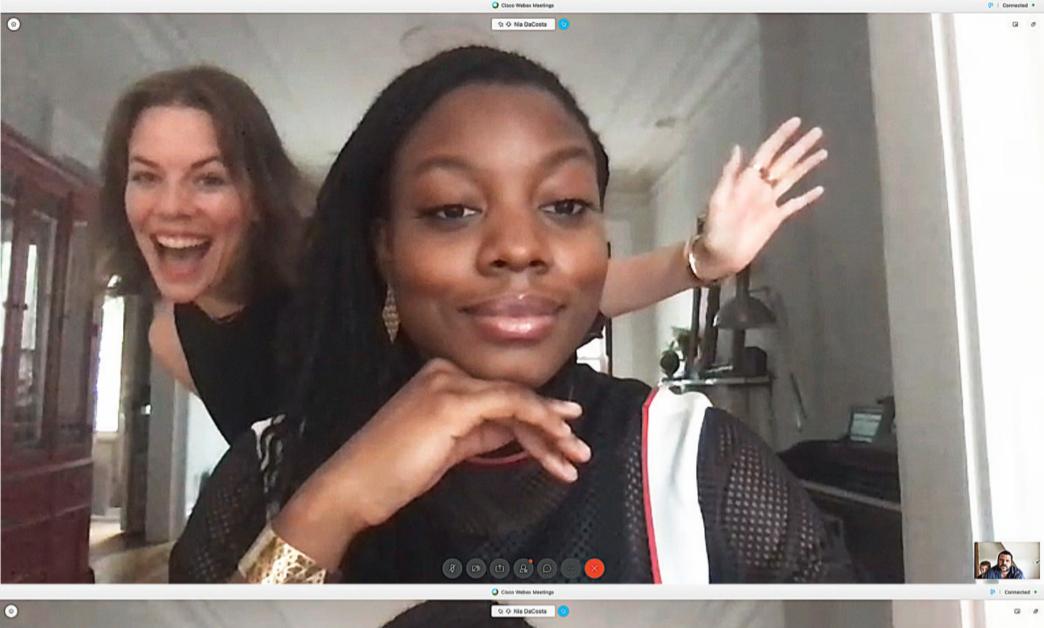
### Lolo Zouaï

"I did a lot of dyeing of my hair by myself," says the singer Lolo Zouaï of her early quarantine experiments. "I started from black, then bleached my ends, slowly transitioned into honey blonde, and now I just dyed it pink. I've been making myself cute, even if I'm just going to the UPS Store. It's really important for me to feel like myself. It's easy to feel lost during this time, so just remembering who you are and what makes you happy when you can't see your friends—putting yourself together—is so important."

Marlo Laz necklace; marlolaz.com. Have a Heart x Muse charm necklace; musexmuse.com. Philosophy Di Lorenzo Serafini dress; fivestoryny.com.









### Nia DaCosta

"The pandemic has been an unprecedented interruption of everyone's lives, and I feel lucky because I've had a job to do throughout," says Nia DaCosta, who directed the upcoming Jordan Peele-written Candyman and is shown here with her friend Catrin Hedström. "A lot of it has been just trying to figure out how to make it work for myself and how to continue to stay connected to the people that I love."

**Louis Vuitton** earring and bracelet; louisvuitton.com. **Prada** dress; prada.com.











x Meetings 

Connected •



### **Maisie Williams**

"It was the bougiest look for a video call that I've ever had," says actor Maisie Williams of her elaborate accessories. While waiting for the release of Marvel's *The New Mutants*, Williams used her time wisely, decamping from London to Paris to learn French. "It's going to be hard to return because I won't have anyone to speak French with in London. I guess I'm going to just talk to myself."

Cartier earring, necklace, and ring; cartier.com. Miu Miu dress; miumiu.com. In this story: hair for H.E.R., Theo Barrett; makeup for H.E.R., Kisha Augustine; makeup for Nia DaCosta, Mimi Quiquine; hair for Rachel Brosnahan, Jemma Muradian; makeup for Rachel Brosnahan, Bob Scott. Details, see In This Issue.









### Clean Scheme

Spas of the past traded in intimacy and a hands-on, holistic approach. Today it's practitioners behind plexiglass and Clorox between clients.

Naomi Fry considers what it means to indulge.

Then the opportunity arose to see what it felt like to get pampered during this unprecedentedly grim time, it struck me as just surreal enough to be intriguing. You see, even under the most regular of conditions, I veer toward self-denial. I consider a mani-pedi at a hole-in-the-wall nail salon a relative extravagance; the last time I received a massage must have been a half-decade ago; and, though I'm nearing my mid-40s, I've had a facial only once, purchased as a gift from a friend. And certainly the current circumstances—even in New York City, where Governor Andrew Cuomo gave the go-ahead to commence spa operations again in early July—enhanced my usual puritanical squeamishness. Would receiving a wildly nonessential spa treatment, I asked myself, cross the fault line from self-care to plain selfishness, shutting out the harsh realities of risk and suffering for the sake of mere indulgence?

Still, I had to admit, if there was ever a time in which I yearned for a spa treatment, this was it. I was extremely fortunate—I had a job and a home, and I had remained healthy, as had my family, and while I'd hardly left my house in months, I knew that being able to hunker down was in itself a privilege. And yet I was also climbing the walls. The uncertainty and precariousness, the constant struggle to juggle work and childcare, and the lack of reallife engagement and community had all taken a toll, and I was depressed and anxious. I had barely slept a full night in months, and my shoulders were permanently hunched around my ears—perhaps the only reminder that I still had a body. (As for a face, forget it!) "People are scared, people are tired, and people are desperate for touch," Kathy Van Ness, the COO of the famed Golden Door in San Marcos, California, which, as I write, is planning to reopen in early September, told me when I spoke to her over the phone about spas in the age of COVID-19. "Our clients want to feel better." I decided to take the plunge closer to home.

To arrive at Rescue Spa, in Manhattan's Flatiron district, I took the half-empty subway in from Brooklyn for the first time since the advent of the coronavirus, a once-familiar routine now rendered uncanny, with masked commuters forgoing their usual bullish tactics and keeping a tentative distance from one another. Was this even present-day New York? I wondered as I made my way down a ghost town-like Broadway, passing branches of Equinox and WeWork, onetime citadels of aughties triumph that were, at least for now, standing disused like so many faded mom-and-pop shops. At the all-white, high-ceilinged Rescue, which had

reopened in early July, masked employees treated a reduced customer load, in observation of social-distancing orders, and extra sanitary measures appeared to be in full effect. After having my temperature taken (a normal 98.6) and receiving a health questionnaire confirming that I hadn't been in contact with a person ill with COVID and that I would continue to keep on high alert for symptoms, I sat down to receive a gentle, skilled manicure, given by a P.P.E.-wearing technician through a plexiglass panel with an opening at the bottom, the chair and table Cloroxed vigorously before and after my appointment. The setup—half bank-teller station and half glory hole—felt unfamiliar yet somehow reassuring, as did the sharp scent of cleaning products that permeated the manicure station. For my nail-polish shade, I selected Essie's orangey-red Fifth Avenue, perhaps to remind myself of a fabled version of the city that seemed to have little to do with conditions on the ground. "People are so grateful they're able to come in again," Danuta Mieloch, Rescue's founder, told me as I lay down on a treatment table swathed in pristine cream-colored linens in one of the spa's 14 private rooms. "Everyone is so anxious right now—when will this be over, how do I stay healthy, are we going to be okay?—and all of this affects not just your mood but your skin too."

As we spoke, the masked and gloved Mieloch was administrating, with the sure but lulling motions of a true expert, Biologique Recherche's exfoliating, hydrating P50 lotion to my forehead, eye area, and upper cheeks, as well as to my upper chest and neck. My nose and mouth, meanwhile, remained tucked beneath my mask. A mandatory prohibition on any treatment that requires the full uncovering of the face—whether it be lip piercing, mustache waxing, or a facial—had remained in place; and so, while some spas have decided to take facials off the menu completely, others have found creative twists on the service. (Caitlin Girouard, Governor Cuomo's press secretary, stated in mid-August that they "are continuing to monitor how and when higher-risk spa services like facials can safely resume.") Since reopening, Haven Spa, in SoHo, has launched a service named, aptly, the 2020, in which clients can receive a treatment that edges around their face covering; and Rescue, too, has begun offering what the CONTINUED ON PAGE 127

### **TESTING THE WATERS**

At spas, caution is the new Zen. Two bathers wear Marysia swimsuits and Illesteva face shields at a private California pool. Details, see In This Issue.













# Counting on the Country

Model turned organic farmer Kirsten Owen has spent much of the last 15 years growing blueberries in Vermont. Dressed in fall's rustic delights, she and her daughter, Billie Rose, show us around the farm. Photographed by Alex Webb.

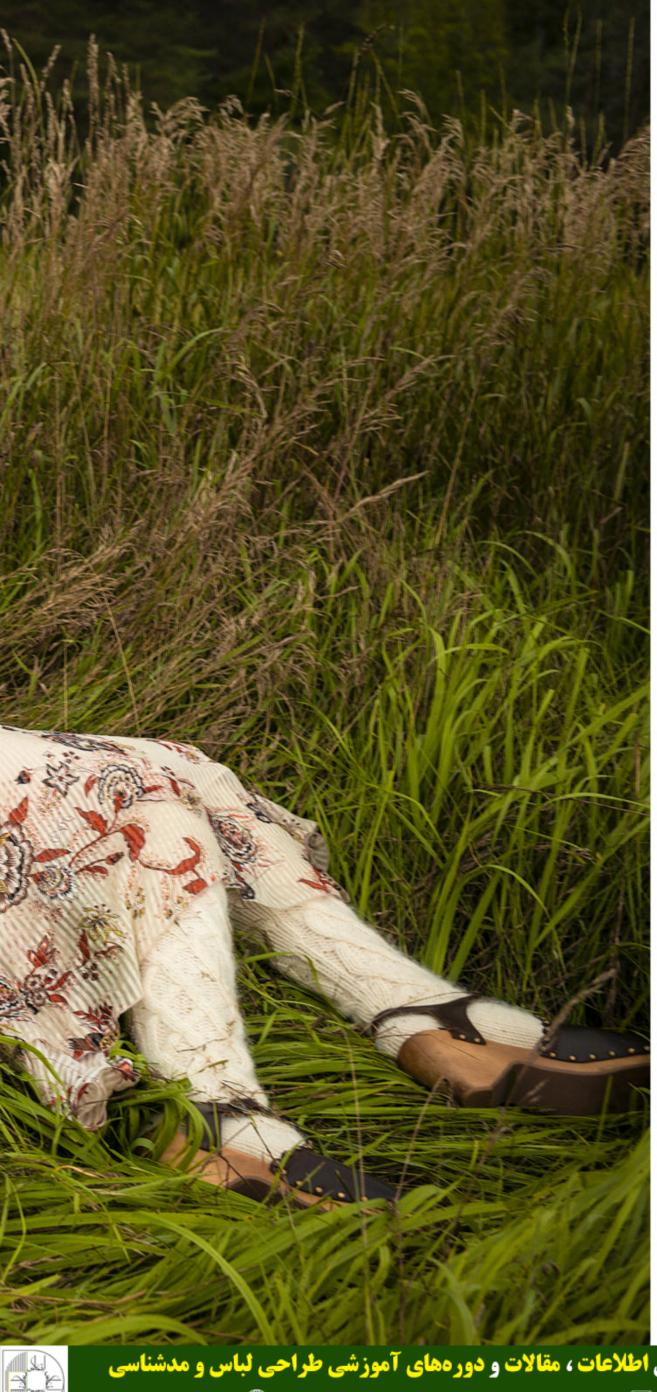












irsten Owen's conversion from high-fashion model to organic blueberry farmer had everything from blind luck to sheer happenstance behind it. "I had a fantasy about having a blueberry farm after I moved here, in 2002," she says of her 56-acre patch of land in northern Vermont, from which she speaks via landline. "And then some land right next to me, which already had 250 young blueberry plants, came up for sale. I couldn't resist."

This sylvan setup, a mere hour or so south of Canada, where she was born and raised, is a far cry from the life Owen led in her 20s and 30s, crisscrossing the Atlantic for runway shows and shoots and as a muse to Helmut Lang, Melanie Ward, and other creators of 1990s grunge looks. These days, Owen, now 50, is mostly in the country with her children, Billie Rose, 25 (pictured here), and Maël, 28, and her energies are reserved for her blueberry bushes. "I'd never worked so hard in my life before taking on this farm," she says. "It forces you to stay strong physically."

But come spring of 2020, when Owen would normally have been pruning, weeding, and mulching (with organic pine mulch: "It offers the soil acidity," she explains), she and her family needed to be in Toronto with Owen's mother. In her absence, neighbors and locals looked after the harvest, undertaking the spring work Owen couldn't. "And," to her surprise, "they were all happy to do it—in trade for blueberries."

Upon Owen's return to the farm in early July, she realized she had more blueberries than she knew what to do with. While her crop normally supplies both local farmers markets and day-trippers out picking berries just for the fun of it, she enlisted Salvation Farms—an organization that provides for those with food insecurity—to help take a bit of the bumper crop off her hands. It all made for a heartwarming homecoming—except for the mice that squatted in her kitchen while she was away.

"That part wasn't great," she says, "but what felt really good was to be back in nature."—LILAH RAMZI









### **CUZ SHE LOVES YOU**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 85

thing to me. Because there's a lot of upset people, and there's a lot of people who have power. There's a lot of voter suppression in Black communities. But there's a lot of angry white kids now. And I'm like, 'Yo, register to vote. Go out. You won't get suppressed if you try to go to your ballot box.' You know? I think it's important to remind people of what they can do. My job isn't to tell you how to vote. But my job is hopefully to inspire you to vote...to activate you, so that you can take your protest to the ballot box."

But first, she knows that in order to save and serve the culture, she has to save and serve herself. "I think it's important that I take full responsibility for the way the world perceives me because that is the way they're gonna perceive someone who looks like me in the future. Maybe, hopefully, that would give some young girl someone to look up to and take away the opportunity for someone to weaponize her uniqueness against her. I had to travel the world and I had to meet people and read DMs and look into their eyes and really hear their stories to believe that I was making an impact in a positive way. And now that I believe in myself in that way, I'm gonna continue to just push that conversation by being a better me every single day."□

### **CAN FASHION BE POLITICAL?**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 90

the label's expansion has been gradual, with Comey's ambitions hewing more to fostering customer loyalty within her artsy niche than to attaining fashion-superstar status—and many younger designers appear to be emulating her. Amid the summer protests, designers behind some of New York City's buzziest labels—Eckhaus Latta and Jonathan Cohen, to name two—joined Comey in pledging a portion of their proceeds to organizations supporting Black Lives Matter. Never mind the fact that, due to COVID, their own bottom lines had been shattered. (This isn't without precedent: During the 1990 recession, New York designers banded together for the three-day Seventh on Sale bazaar to raise money for the fight against AIDS.)

Other new brands have consciously structured their business to give back. Lidia May, a luxury leather-goods line based in Bangladesh, was cofounded by May Yang and Rasheed Khan with the explicit aim of "uplifting the local maker community," as Yang puts it, working with a Dhaka-based grassroots organization to train women in higher-wage skills like embroidery and hiring them to produce the filigree embellishments on the brand's handbags. (Full disclosure: I am on the Lidia May advisory board.) "We'd like to serve as a model other brands can copy," says Khan. "Most companies come to Dhaka for the cheap wages; what would happen if they started investing in this community instead?"

According to Dorothée Baumann-Pauly, director of the Geneva Center for Business and Human Rights, this mindset is already trickling up to larger brands. One she cites is the French firm Decathlon, which makes long-term commitments to its suppliers and collaborates with them to develop business models that allow both brand and workers to prosper. "Savvy companies," says Baumann-Pauly, "see the writing on the wall: You'd better align your practices with what this young generation of consumers is going to consider legitimate."

The health of the planet is one concern weighing on those consumers' minds. In her 2019 book Fashionopolis: The Price of Fast Fashion and the Future of Clothes, Dana Thomas notes that in 2018, the average American shopper bought 68 garments—more than one item of clothing per week. It's a chicken-and-egg question whether companies have boosted production to meet consumers' apparently insatiable appetite for new things, or whether that appetite has been whetted by the vast increase in goods on offer (Zara alone produces about 450 million garments each year)—but the follow-up question is the same: What are we going to do with all this stuff?

Secondhand shopping is one answer. Gen Z'ers are flocking to apps like Depop that let them thrift from their peers' closets, and sources from a 2019 McKinsey report predict that the resale market a decade from now could be larger than that of fast fashion—a cheering prospect if you fret about the

millions of tons of apparel dumped in landfills annually. Other answers include upcycling—retrieving fibers from fabrics to make new ones—and "regenerating," as Marine Serre terms her innovative method of re-crafting old garments and textiles.

Frankly, it feels a bit odd to be writing about the perils of fashion overproduction and overconsumption when, in the midst of COVID, orders have been canceled, stores are going under, and shoppers are hitting the brakes on spending. But at some point, the global fashion machine will start spinning again—and the industry will have to decide whether it needs to spin as fast and as furiously as it did. Many designers say no: Dries Van Noten, Erdem Moralioglu, and Tory Burch are among those who signed an "Open Letter to the Fashion Industry" in May that insisted on a collective slowdown, with fewer and smaller collections and clothes delivered in tune with the seasons for which they were produced.

For shoppers, this means fewer discounts and more saving up for beautiful clothes—a forgotten habit we might all relearn. And as designers reorient toward more purposeful pieces with a longer life cycle, expect to see high fashion continuing the process the streetwear revolution began, creatively reimagining staple items and dispensing with the idea that every new collection must erase the last. You can already see this approach on the Gucci runway, where Alessandro Michele evolves ideas and motifs over time—think of his irreverent takes on the GG logo or his continual romancing of the awkward-chic pantsuit, a look he promotes as gender-neutral. Novelty for novelty's sake is *out*; what's *in* is happy-making fashion intended for everyone, no matter size, race, or gender. "The task that fashion has," as Balenciaga's Demna Gvasalia put it recently, "is to bring excitement to the person wearing it. My upcoming seasons are full of light, even though we're in this deep hole of horrible things. Through the work we do we can talk about this hope—the light at the end of the tunnel." That it will soon seem par for the course to see boys traipsing down the catwalk with





oh-so-cute Hello Kitty bags (as they did recently at Balenciaga) is part of a long-term process of reprioritization crystallized by the pandemic, as designers consider what matters—beauty, quality, authenticity—and jettison what does not. "We've got this moment to stop and reassess," notes Klein. "Let's use it."

Thirty years ago, just before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Francis Fukuyama published an article titled "The End of History." Anticipating the collapse of the Soviet Union and with it the Soviet-style communism that parried with Western capitalism for global dominion, Fukuyama argued that the great political debates had all been settled and that going forward, "politics" would be a matter of tinkering. Fukuyama's thinking was blinkered in many respects, but his analysis does help explain why, for the past 30 years, a lot of what fashion's been up to has consisted of looping through vintage ideas at an ever-increasing clip. If we all feel like everything has already been said and done, why even try to say or do something new? Marc Jacobs captured that zeitgeist in his grunge collection for Perry Ellis, shown in 1992 at the peak of post-Cold War exultation, with its thrift-shop aesthetics auguring a fashion epoch premised on reiteration and pastiche.

The exception to this rule is the creative spark lit by diversity, which makes perfect sense: When the world is complete—when there's nowhere left to go—the "shock of the new" is supplied by outsiders fighting their way in. One need look no further than the disruptive influence of gender nonconformity on fashion to witness this dynamic at work, but you can see it, too, in the gentler provocations of Olivier Rousteing. Nearing 10 years at the helm of Balmain, Rousteing has made it his project to expand the meaning of "Frenchness."

"Walk the streets of Paris, it's a huge mix—but you don't see that reflected in the image of *la Parisienne*," he says, referencing the stereotype of the white, well-to-do lady-about-town. "It's a closed aesthetic—it tells people, *You don't belong*," Rousteing goes on. "Do we want this old idea to still be going in another 50 years? Or do we want

to say something new, which is what fashion is supposed to be about?"

In July, Rousteing marked the 75th anniversary of Balmain by showing his couture collection on a boat traveling along the Seine. The presentation included silhouettes from the maison archives—a retread that Rousteing positioned as a breakthrough. "I'm showing the public: Here I am, the first Black leader of one of the first French fashion houses. It was my protest."

Most of the designers and creatives interviewed for this story are Black, as is stylist Law Roach. Each of them authors their own version of fashion, and fashion politics, as does Pyer Moss's Kerby Jean-Raymond, who stunned the industry by opening his spring 2016 show with a 12-minute video about police brutality; Hood By Air visionary Shayne Oliver, whose recent comeback has been enthusiastically welcomed; Telfar Clemens, of White Castle-collaboration fame; multidisciplinary minimalist Grace Wales Bonner; Amaka Osakwe, founder of the Nigeria-based Maki Oh, whose soigné looks incorporating native techniques count Michelle Obama as a fan; Tyler Mitchell, the photographer and filmmaker who recently inked a deal with the creative agency UTA. Calls for greater diversity in fashion have intensified in the wake of the BLM protests; the point of this very abbreviated list is to show that, for the fashion industry, inclusion is not an obligation—it's an opportunity.

"More Black creators means more stories, more ideas," asserts Abloh, explaining why he's devoted a fair amount of time of late raising money for a scholarship fund that will send Black students to premier fashion schools. "As an industry, we've got to find ways to onboard people from the community—which is hard when internships don't pay and hiring is based a lot on who you know or who your family knows." (It's also hard when companies don't foster an inclusive work environment, Abloh might have added—an issue that another new initiative, the Black in Fashion Council, cofounded by publicist Sandrine Charles and Teen Vogue editor Lindsay Peoples Wagner, was launched to address.)

More diversity in the fashion industry is a prima facie good. But it's important to be clear-eyed about what it won't do, which is cure the sickness of the supply chain. For years, issues of economic justice here—narrowly defined as the right to consume—and the right for garment workers to earn a living wage have been set in competition with each other, as though insisting on the latter is tantamount to saying low-income Americans don't deserve stylish clothes. This is a false choice: America's poor and precarious don't need access to cheap, disposable goods—they need *money*. They're in the same quandary as the garment workers, as the economic fallout of the pandemic has laid bare. Where inequality is concerned, money is both the problem and the solution. The rest is noise.

Martine Rose believes that, thanks to COVID, we are now, suddenly, living with a future again. The end of history ended the moment the gears of the world sputtered to a stop—"creating a tear in the fabric of reality," as she puts it. "It seems like, after so many years of fiddling around the edges of the familiar, something genuinely new could come in." She points to movements that arose in prior moments of rupture, like Dada emerging from the ashes of World War I or hippie counterculture blazing defiance to the society that produced the war in Vietnam.

A-Cold-Wall\*'s Ross is more cautious. "I think COVID has surfaced conversations that have been going on belowground," he suggests. "I don't believe that means we'll get a total social reset, but it has created space to ask questions. We can see the system now—and choose to evolve it in a direction that's more humane. Which makes it an exciting time to be a designer," he adds, "because you can help drive the shift."

That shift won't be the work of one election. It may not even be the work of one generation. But the work starts today, and a key part fashion can play is to use its genius for dream-creation to help people imagine what comes next. "Let's embrace change," Rousteing says. "It's how you make new history."







### **LOVE & PROTEST**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 90

person, but it feels biblical to me...the way they speak about life."

Given all that, it is something of a surprise to watch Khan shuffle down the hill to a bench for our interview, and be struck first of all by the hugeness of their pants, light-blue jeans held up as if by magic, paired with a simple black T-shirt and black Gucci Flashtrek boots. Their long hair is unbraided and unrestrained, in a mossy halo reaching out into the world around them. As we talk about their activism and what this moment means, as their huge, derpy dog, Sula, lumbers about, sniffing the grass, breathing loudly on my tape recorder, squeezing herself uninvited but entirely welcomed on my lap, as Khan says, "That's what I'll always love about us...the unpredictability within us...we either become the most hideous of things or the closest thing to the grace of God," it feels less like I'm at my job and more like I'm skipping first period to hang out with the coolest skater in the school.

Khan grew up in the projects of Toronto as one of three kids born to a single mother with mental illness and the autoimmune disorder Graves' disease (they have a twin sister and an older brother). Childhood was unpredictable, chaotic and difficult in the way childhoods under those circumstances can be, with episodes of homelessness and time spent in women's shelters. (Khan says they remain close with their mother and sister: "My mother did the best she could for me, and now I do my best for her as a caregiver, advocate, and friend.") A move to Florida to live with their grandmother did not bring the stability and relief they had hoped it would. It was in Florida, however, that Khan discovered athletics. "I played basketball with the desperation of someone who needed something to believe in. My gender identity was a basketball," they tell me laughing. "If you threw a ball to me now, I would still have handles."(It is the first of two times they will make a "My gender identity is..." joke. The second time, they will say, "My gender identity is just...intensity.")

Then, years later, back in Toronto, Khan became obsessed with boxing. They still train constantly and tell me that their favorite downtime watch is old boxing matches on YouTube and that their morning routine consists of a cup of matcha, reading the news, and 100 push-ups. "All your shit comes up," they say of boxing. "If you rage when you are confronted, it comes up. If you shut down, it comes up. If you weep, it comes up. And so boxing is all about control. It is all about control, strategy, and adaptiveness."

When Khan was a teenager, they were placed in group homes, sometimes sleeping outside. "Something happened to me when I was around 16 and on a park bench much like this one," they say. "I was hungry, and I had been on that park bench maybe seven nights in a row. And I just thought, If I died right now, no one would even notice."

This was not a far-fetched idea for a poor, Black, nonbinary kid in Toronto. A year or so earlier Khan had been stopped by police and carded, the Canadian law-enforcement practice of asking for ID and questioning citizens at random. Studies have shown that Black Canadians are carded at a rate substantially higher than their white counterparts. But Khan hadn't just been carded, they were strip-searched.

"And I didn't know that I could say no," they recall quietly. "They were the first people I was ever fully naked in front of, outside of my parents as a child.... And they made jokes about my body, made jokes about me...and I was humiliated in a way that I just didn't know I could feel."

With that in mind, Khan says, they fully accepted the idea that no one was coming to help them. "And the only way I could live is if I fought to."

Most people know Janaya Future Khan as a fighter. Their prominence in the Black Lives Matter movement can be dated to 2014, when they helped organize an action outside Toronto's U.S. Consulate after the shooting death of 18-year-old Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Missouri, and the much less publicized police killing of 33-year-old Jermaine Carby, during a traffic stop in Brampton, Ontario. Thousands of people showed up to the Toronto action. Ontario legislative assemblyman Michael Coteau was

serving in the Provincial Parliament at the time and feels that protest permanently shifted the government's approach to racial equity. (Ontario has since established an Anti-Racism Directorate.) "I have a lot of respect for those young people who were not given a lot of respect at the time," Coteau told me. "They went through intense pressure...they were on those steps for weeks, in the cold, and no one would talk to them. [But] they were strong, brave, and I think really thoughtful on how they brought this message to the people, and if it wasn't for them I don't think we'd be in this environment today."

One way people think of a strident Black Lives Matter activist is as a young fired-up person demanding justice, taking every microaggression as a call to arms, constantly calling for people to be canceled, screaming "Burn it all down" until they get their way. But this is just a script that's been written over years, over generations. Power most especially the power of white supremacy, patriarchy, heteronormativity, capitalism—protects itself, and it does so by labeling everyone who challenges it, no matter who they are or why they are fighting, as either an irritating thing to be disregarded or a fearsome thing to be destroyed. It can never acknowledge that the person challenging it is simply human.

I think here about a 16-year-old Black, queer, nonbinary child alone on a park bench. It occurs to me that if our systems of inequality continue to make kids feel they have no worth, no agency, no homes, then these will be people who will spend their lives training to fight. The problem, of course, is that this idea suggests that only the oppressed suffer, and therefore it is only on the oppressed to resist. Khan believes otherwise. It is not uncommon to hear them in interviews or on the Sunday Sermons referring to "scripts," as in the "script" of whiteness, the "script" of heteronormativity, the "script" of capitalism. They argue that these roles, these ways of being, are pre-written lines, and no one among us can be fully human while following them.

"I took a long time to step offscript," Khan tells me. "It takes a while. It takes a while to be strong enough, to







build up the muscle. Even my body, my little ambiguous body—I couldn't wear certain shirts, because my experience in the world has always been 'What are you?' 'Are you a boy or a girl?' It made me so self-conscious. And now I'm not afraid of any of those things."

This is what makes Khan a different kind of activist. They are here to change policies, for sure, but the sermons and talks and writing go far beyond the basic arguments for why there shouldn't be racism or transphobia, the crisp infographics on how to be an ally. What they are advocating for is a greater sense of wholeness for all people. In Khan's view this means being prepared to challenge everything we've been told. "To assimilate into a system that we didn't design... is to forfeit a part of yourself," they tell me as the day stretches into early afternoon. "And I don't think that people really understand that that's the trade-off. You can't fully know who you are if you assimilate and disappear yourself into a set of conditions that you didn't design."

The sermons will continue (in late August, they spoke at length about the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin), as will their work as an international ambassador for Black Lives Matter, which means traveling to cities where fledgling movements are underway, helping young organizers plan their strategies and increase effectiveness. Khan is considering new projects, reading Maya Angelou and Ocean Vuong, and trying to keep their growing profile in perspective. "It's disorienting," they admit of the attention they've received in recent months. "I feel an incredible amount of responsibility, an incredible amount to do right by the people who give me their belief, give me their time. That is always going to be the benchmark for me. They're always going to be the compass....You have to honor the commitments that you've made. That's the only thing that matters at the end of the day. That's the only legacy that matters: your integrity. That's the imprint."□

### AN AMERICAN FEAST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 102

forward, it's important to understand that his roots run through Ethiopia,

Sweden, and a series of French kitchens in which he trained. Samuelsson moved to the United States in 1995, quickly made a name for himself, and, at the age of 25, earned three stars from The New York Times as chef at New York's Aquavit. But the culture and foodways of Black America had been a preoccupation of his even as an adopted child in Sweden (where he was moved at age three). "He's someone whose life has been shaped by migration," says Endolyn, "some of which was not his choice and some of which was. The migration story is something he has thought a lot about, especially The Great Migration, and how much that impacted American food."

"I've been on a journey since I came to this country," Samuelsson explains. "I went to restaurants in New York, like Jezebel and B. Smith, and they were very different kinds of restaurants than the ones I cooked at in France. For me it's ongoing work." Nearly 15 years have passed since Samuelsson explored his African heritage in his book *The Soul of a New* Cuisine. "I had just met my family then," he says. "I had just reconnected with my Africa. Today, I want to talk about the Black cooking family that is so large here in America and link the stories."

The support of Black chefs played a significant role in his career. "When I came here, people like Patrick Clark [formerly of the Odeon and Tavern on the Green in New York] and Leah Chase showed me the way." He has returned the favor in the years since, cooking with dozens of the chefs featured in *The Rise*. "I specifically opened Red Rooster in Harlem so aspiration and inspiration would take place in Harlem—that's an amazing megaphone and stage for being able to cook Black food. I look at that as a privilege. I *have* to share these stories."

The timing is ripe for *The Rise*. In a year that brought the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, David McAtee, and many others, as well as the subsequent civil uprisings and the centering of Black Lives Matter, food is playing a significant role in the movement for social justice and equity. Building on the legacy of Georgia Gilmore, a cook who helped fund the

Montgomery bus boycott by baking and selling food, are 2020 groups such as Fuel the People, which feeds protesters on the front lines, and Bakers Against Racism, which has been staging virtual bake sales to raise money for organizations that support Black lives. "We need to know these incredible roots, techniques, and storytellers are around and inspire people to say Black food matters," Samuelsson says. "It is a field that you can and should go into, and here are the storytellers and the chefs and the creators behind it. We deserve a day in the spotlight." □

### **CLEAN SCHEME**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 114

spa has been calling "targeted" treatments, such as the Eye Zone. ("Let your eyes do the talking while your mouth is covered!" the spa's website cheerfully proclaims.)

As Mieloch gave me a taste of Rescue's most popular techniques to tighten and refresh the skin, my face covering remained firmly in place, a situation that struck me, hilariously, as a little pornographic. The mouth and nose seemed to gain an erogenous zone-like aura of the forbidden, not unlike, say, a burlesque dancer's nipples, painstakingly concealed by tasseled pasties. "All we can do right now is our best," Mieloch told me as she briskly massaged my jawline, carefully skirting my mask. While the spa was closed, Rescue estheticians had been consulting with clients virtually, walking them through skin-care routines to do at home. There was, however, Mieloch added, no replacement for an in-person meeting and hands-on contact: "To see an esthetician is, first of all, to take care of the heart," she said. Apart from my husband and daughter, no other human being had touched or been touched by me in months, and there was something almost thrilling in having my corporeal self handled by a complete stranger, albeit one who was most certainly on the clock. (Could this be love? I wondered, nearly groaning as Mieloch's oiled hands gave my aching neck a quick rubdown.) On my way out of the room, once again aware that I had a face and body, I dawdled for a moment in Rescue's expansive, airy entrance hall, where the spa sells products to its clients.



Here was blatant, seductive commerce, which in a metropolitan environment so often stands in for life, and which, for months, I had nearly forgotten about. Eyeing the goods on display, I felt suddenly flush with pleasure, if not necessarily with capital. A fleet of Byredo perfumes were arranged on one table, their pleasingly squat glass bottles promising transporting scents like Oud and Black Saffron. I lifted one of them to my nose; through my mask, I couldn't smell a thing.

A few days later, with my thirst for calming but invigorating treatments for body and soul not yet slaked, I drove to Water Mill, in the Hamptons, to spend the night at Shou Sugi Ban House, a Japanese-inspired luxury wellness retreat and spa, which opened last year and offers a variety

of massages, scrubs, wraps, and hydrotherapy treatments, as well as yoga and tennis and a slew of "healing arts," including sound baths, guided meditation, and shamanic and crystal rituals. The urban-spa experience had been a trippy inversion of the usual stepping away from the grit and grime of the crowded city; there were no crowds to escape. And so I wondered if a spa excursion would feel more natural in more secluded and greener pastures.

On the open road, on a clear and beautiful summer day, it was almost possible to forget about the pandemic; whether that was a good thing or not, I wasn't sure, but for the moment, I pushed my hesitations away. This seemed easy enough to do as, two neat hours after departing Brooklyn, I approached Shou Sugi Ban House's

impeccably pebbled entrance lot, beautifully landscaped with cryptomeria and London plane trees, and punctuated by a large stone Buddha and three black Teslas, presumably ready to ferry guests to their private aircrafts at the East Hampton Airport. As I approached the entrance, I was welcomed by mask-clad, whites-wearing employees in a nifty golf cart, who were set to guide me to my room, directly after taking my temperature with a non-contact assessment thermometer and clamping my pointer finger into a pulse oximeter.

"When you close your eyes, imagine that everything that's outside the wood gates, you've left behind. All the things you need to concentrate on are here," an esthetician named Nicole told me, sotto voce, while she readied

### In This Issue

### Table of contents:

27: Turtleneck (\$705), shirt (\$600), and skirt (\$2,245). Turtleneck at net-a-porter.com. Shirt and skirt at saksfifthavenue.com. **34:** Top (\$4,600) and skirt (\$2,750); (800) 550-0005. Tailor: Cha Cha Zutic. Cover look: **34:** Dress, \$5,900; Valentino, NYC. Earrings, \$16,995; jasonofbh .com. Chopard rings and bracelet, priced upon request; chopard.com. Tiffany & Co. rings (\$17,500-\$70,000) and bracelet (\$350,000); tiffany.com. Shoes, \$695; manoloblahnik .com. Manicurist: Eri Ishizu, using Red Carpet Manicure. Tailor: Susie's

Custom Designs. Editor's letter: 40: On Lizzo: LaQuan Smith top (\$2,275) and skirt (\$3,800); laquansmith .com. Sylva & Cie earrings, \$15,750; Wilkes Bashford, Palo Alto, CA. Chopard rings and bracelet, priced upon request; chopard.com. Tiffany & Co. rings (\$17,500-\$70,000) and bracelet (\$350,000); tiffanv.com. Mia Becar sandals, \$695; miabecar.com. Manicurist: Eri Ishizu, using Red Carpet Manicure. Tailor: Susie's Custom Designs. 48: Dress (price upon request) and earrings (\$790). Dress at select Gucci stores. Earrings at

Editor's note: For "Dreaming Out Loud" (pages 292–293) in the September 2020 issue, the artist Eric N. Mack was credited as only a set designer. He provided creative direction for that shoot. Due to an editing error, the photographer Elliott Jerome Brown Jr.'s name was incorrectly spelled.

gucci.com. Manicurist: Thuy To. Tailor: Susie's Custom Designs.

### **CUZ SHE LOVES YOU**

**78–79:** Dress, \$9,360; moschino.com. Sylva & Cie earrings, \$78,500: Mitchells, Westport, CT. Chopard rings and bracelet, priced upon request; chopard.com. Tiffany & Co. rings (\$17,500-\$70,000) and bracelet (\$350,000); tiffany .com. **81:** Top (\$4,200) and dress (\$7,500); gucci.com. Earrings, price upon request; chopard.com. 84-85: Top (\$2,275) and skirt (\$3,800); laquansmith .com. Earrings, \$15,750; Wilkes Bashford, Palo Alto, CA. In this story: Manicurist: Eri Ishizu, using Red Carpet Manicure. Tailor: Susie's Custom Designs.

### **LOVE & PROTEST**

91: Vest and pants, priced upon request; louisvuitton.com. Necklace, \$85; mejuri .com. Zoë Chicco bracelet, \$995; zoechicco.com. Retrouvai ring, \$1,255; retrouvai.com.

### I LOVE NEW YORK

92-93: On all: Balneaire swim caps. **94–95**: Jacket (\$3,520), shirt (\$2,660), and skirt (\$3,310). Bag, \$995; jimmychoo.com. Marc Jacobs shoes, price upon request; marcjacobs.com. **96:** Top photo: On Fox: Earrings, \$295; jenniferfisherjewelry .com. Miu Miu bag, \$1,820; miumiu.com. Boots, \$975; proenzaschouler.com. Coat (\$11,700) and bag (\$2,890). Belt, \$320; miumiu.com. Boots, \$975; proenzaschouler .com. Bottom photo: Jacket (\$5,350), top (\$4,600), skirt (\$2,750), and sunglasses (\$670). Chanel Airpods box (on Balenciaga bag), \$950; (800) 550-0005. Scarf, \$295; marcjacobs.com. Lanvin earrings, \$420; lanvin.com. Mejuri bracelet, \$60; mejuri .com. Balenciaga bag, \$2,790; Balenciaga, NYC. Miu Miu clutch, \$2,700; miumiu.com. Marc Jacobs shoes, price upon request; marcjacobs.com. **97:** Dress, \$6,990.

Panconesi by Marco Panconesi ear cuff. \$415; net-a-porter.com. Ana Khouri ear pieces (\$9,000-\$21,600); anakhouri.com. Gloves, \$590; gucci.com. 98-99: Large photo: On Smalls: Coat (\$4,250), necklace (\$1,490), and gloves (\$320); Marc Jacobs shoes, price upon request; marcjacobs.com. Bottom row of photos: On Willis: Coat (\$3,490) and top (\$1,290); proenzaschouler.com. Gypsy Sport beaded chain-link mask, \$30; therealreal.com. On Bennett: Blazer (\$816) and pants (\$715); telfar .net. Hanes tank undershirt, \$16 for 6; target.com. Marni socks (\$65) and shoes (\$590); marni.com. Top left photo: On Ashley: Coat (\$3,250), blouse (\$1,700), pants (\$890), bag (\$4,650) and boots (\$1,050); celine.com. Coat, similar styles at celine.com. 100: Top photo: Jennifer Fisher huggies (\$195) and hoops (\$200); jenniferfisherjewelry .com. Gentle Monster sunglasses, \$330;







me for one of Shou Sugi Ban's Earth & Sea Body Wraps. As I lay on an infrared heated mat, she scrubbed my naked body with a dry brush before slathering it with a firming mixture of rhassoul clay, hibiscus powder, and rose-hip-seed oil. As I perspired profusely, allegedly releasing toxins from my taxed system while wrapped mummy-style in a sheet, my face mask securely on, I felt as snug and close as a large peanut in its shell. On the verge of dozing off, I experienced wild snatches of half-dreams, my ensconced state seeming to reveal itself not as the opposite of quarantine but as its actual end point. Now I was truly immovable and therefore truly safe, I mused to myself, jerking fully awake just as Nicole replaced my hot eye mask and bolster with deliciously ice-cold ones.

"I just sanitized all the fixtures in the shower again, to make sure," she whispered as she helped me off the treatment bed, smeared with muddy wrapmuck, to wash myself. When I emerged a few minutes later, feeling as sleek as a seal, all bedclothes had been changed and implements scrubbed, the room standing immaculate.

In a way, the burden placed on luxury spas right now has never been heavier. While tasked with literally life-preserving responsibilities—social distancing between guests, mask-wearing, elevated cleaning procedures—spas have had to simultaneously make sure clients are able to block out the everyday realities related to the pandemic. The serene twilight state into which one ideally slips while receiving treatments at a spa is not easy to bring

about even under the best of circumstances, but Shou Sugi Ban House tries its damnedest. "You come here and immediately you feel calm," Amy Cherry-Abitbol, a former corporate lawyer who left her practice to open Shou Sugi Ban, told me. "Don't you feel calm?" she went on as we sat at a craggy stone table on the spa's grounds, eating mussels and shrimp in broth sprinkled with edible flowers, a soothing breeze lightly ruffling our hair. As I looked around me, at the spa's gray-shingled cedarwood structures set peacefully against the blue sky and the flawlessly manicured local greenery, I had to admit that at least for the moment, I did; and if things felt quite different right now outside the spa's wooden gates, well, then, that was another story.□

gentlemonster.com. Gucci sandals, \$850; gucci.com. Bottom photo: Dress (price upon request), scarf (\$295), and stole (\$750). **101:** Dress, \$7,650. Tailor: Cha Cha Zutic.

RING, RING, **BLING BLING 104–105**: 18K-rosegold-and-diamond earring (\$10,800 for pair) and choker (\$72,900). Jacket, price upon request. 106: 22K-gold earrings with garnet, pink tourmaline, and morganite, \$19,800. Bylgari Serpenti ring (\$7,900) and High Jewelry Serpenti Ring (price upon request). 107: Diamond-and-blueparaiba-tourmaline

ear piece, price upon request. Dress. \$2.690. **108–109:** Tiffany & Co. Extraordinary Tiffany platinum-and-diamond earrings and diamondand-pink-spinel necklace, priced upon request. 110: 14K-gold necklace with turquoise, orange sapphire, and pink tourmaline stones, \$7,300.18K-gold charm necklace, \$43,020. Dress, \$2,595. 111: Gold-and-diamond earring (\$17,900 for pair) and gold bracelet (\$37,000). Dress, price upon request. 112-113: Cartier Reflection de Cartier High Jewelry earring (price upon request for pair), necklace (price upon request), and Cartier Clash de Cartier

ring (\$2,270). Dress, price upon request.

### **CLEAN SCHEME**

at edge of pool: Maillot, \$379; marysia.com. On model in pool: Bikini top (\$162) and bottom (\$162); marysia.com. On both: Face shield, \$49; illesteva.com.

### COUNTING ON THE COUNTRY

116: On Billie Rose: Gabriela Hearst sweater, \$890; gabrielahearst .com. Linea Pelle belt, \$90; lineapelle.com. On Owen: Max Mara turtleneck, \$525; maxmara.com. Polo Ralph Lauren skirt, \$498; ralphlauren.com. Officine Générale pants, \$280;

bergdorfgoodman .com. Shinola belt, \$95; shinola.com. 117: Stella McCartney coat, \$2,875. Etro coat, \$3,330. Max Mara top, \$895; maxmara .com. Acne Studios bandana, \$300; acnestudios.com. Blundstone boots, \$210; blundstone.com. 118: Top photo: Dress, \$4.695. Scarf. \$145: chanluu.com. Filson belt, \$85; filson.com. Bottom photo: Dress, \$4,720. Belt, \$85; filson.com. 119: Top photo: Skirt, price upon request. Sweater, \$10,600. Officine Générale pants, \$280; bergdorfgoodman.com. Bottom photo: Acne Studios scarf. \$240: acnestudios.com.

Echo scarf, \$89; echonewyork.com. Belt, \$125; shinola.com. 120–121: On Owen: Polo Ralph Lauren turtleneck, \$248; ralphlauren.com. On Billie Rose: Vest, \$5,400. Dress, \$3,040. Filson belt, \$75; filson.com. Dolce & Gabbana socks, \$575; dolcegabbana .com. Isabel Marant clogs, \$730; isabelmarant.com.

### INDEX 122–123: 12. Cashmere knit jogger pants

knit jogger pants, \$5,100.

LAST LOOK 130: Boot; toryburch.com.

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# Last Look Tory Burch boot, \$528 We're guessing with all that time spent at home lately, you just may have made

We're guessing with all that time spent at home lately, you just may have made a bit of room in your closet. All the better—now you'll have the space to welcome these stylish slip-ons. Pieced together with two beautifully colored embossed crocodile leathers, this pointed-toe boot even comes with its own (removable) chain. So, really, it's two accessories in one. How's that for downsizing?

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LUCAS LEFLER





