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Magic Alhambra long necklace  
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Zendaya by David Sims at the Palace Theater in Los Angeles, 16th April 2021





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## ROMA





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As one of the world's top models, Alessandra Ambrosio has become an icon and an inspiration. Choosing to live each day with a vibrant Brazilian spirit, she has made a striking impression on the fashion industry, while also stepping into diverse roles across film and television. Always captivating and forever positive, she is a true role model for the next generation of talent.

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**OMEGA**



# VOGUE

August 2021



**DREAM ON**  
MODEL ANOK YAI WEARS A LOUIS VUITTON X FORNASETTI DRESS.  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY THÉO DE GUELTZL.

- 14**  
**Editor's Letter**  
needs now. By Jonathan Van Meter
- 20**  
**Contributors**  
54  
**This Woman's Work**  
Rachel Donadio on Gabriela Hearst's arrival at Chloé
- 22**  
**Bright Idea**  
The joys of bold eye color
- 24**  
**Island in the Sun**  
A new park opens on the Hudson River
- 30**  
**Take Me Higher**  
In three new shows, characters seek a secular salvation
- 34**  
**Ground Support**  
Beauty's latest ingredient
- 36**  
**The Myth and the Magic**  
Louis Vuitton meets the whimsy of Piero Fornasetti
- 38**  
**Some Like It Hot**  
August's best books lead with love
- 40**  
**Dinner on Demand**  
An elegant entertaining trend
- 42**  
**Moon Shot**  
The beauty platform elevating BIPOC founders
- 46**  
**The Doctor Is In**  
Dr. Jill Biden is the First Lady that America
- 70**  
**Scene Stealer**  
Alexandra Marshall on *Lupin* star Omar Sy
- 72**  
**The New Bags**  
Plucky (and perfectly useful) accessories
- 84**  
**Outer Limits**  
This fall, jackets have been reinvented and reimagined
- 86**  
**Make It Work**  
Chioma Nnadi on returning to officewear
- 90**  
**Give Me the Night**  
Glittering fashion that pulls no punches
- 92**  
**Rising to the Occasion**  
Chloe Malle on dressing up to go out
- 98**  
**Index**  
Good style meets good works
- 104**  
**Last Look**

## Cover Look Country Strong

First Lady Jill Biden wears an Oscar de la Renta dress and Tiffany & Co. earrings. Hair, Sally Hershberger; makeup, Francelle Daly. Details, see In This Issue.  
**Photographer: Annie Leibovitz.**  
**Fashion Editor: Tonne Goodman.**

FASHION EDITOR: ALEX HARRINGTON; HAIR: CHRISTIAN EBERHARD; MAKEUP: CÉCILE PARAVINA; PRODUCED BY KITTEN PRODUCTIONS; SET DESIGN: IBBY NUJOYA; DETAILS: SEE IN THIS ISSUE.



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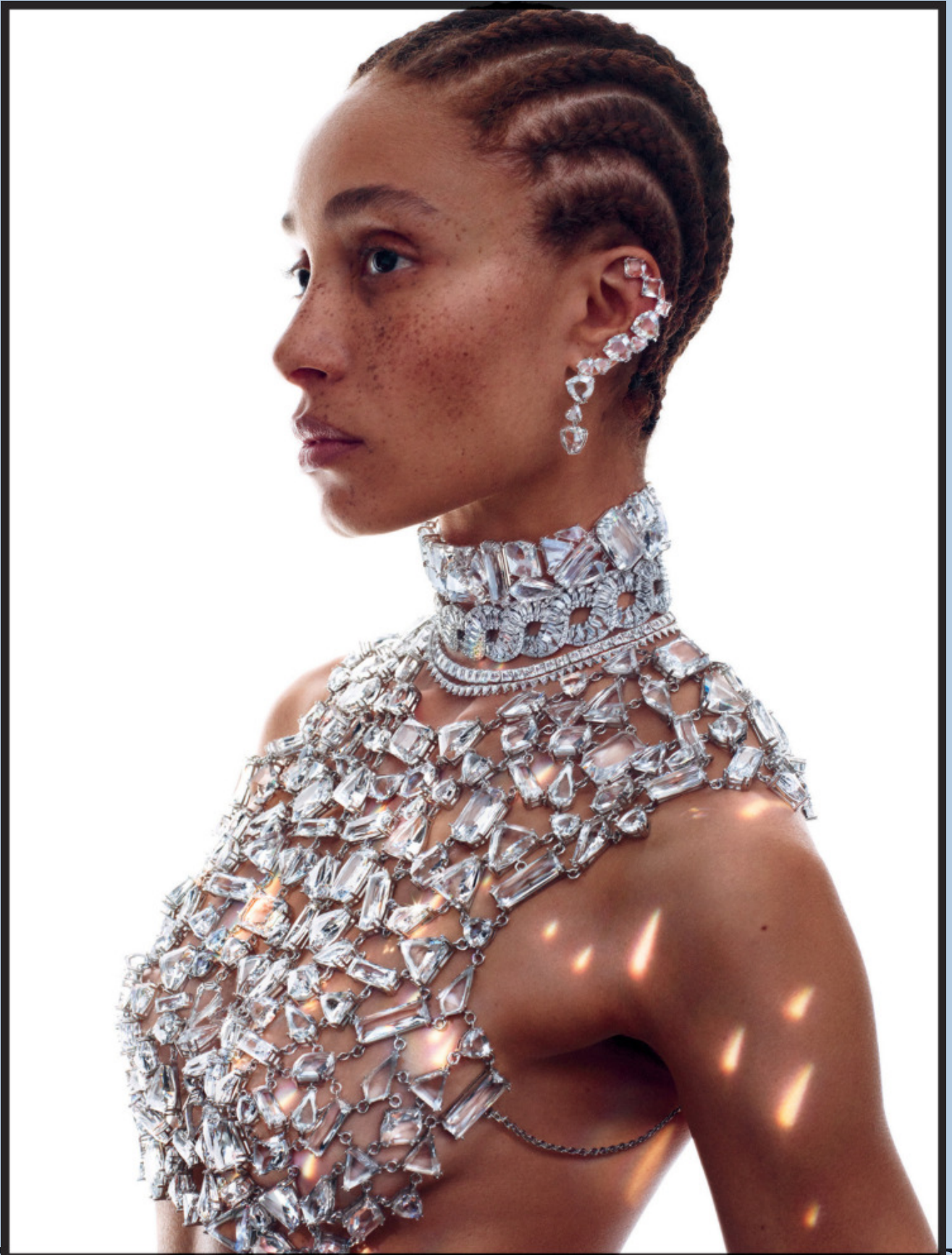
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# Letter From the Editor



## NEW DIRECTIONS

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN AND DR. JILL BIDEN IN 2017; GABRIELLA HEARST (WEARING CHLOÉ), PHOTOGRAPHED BY THÉO DE GUELTLZ; OMAR SY (WEARING A LOUIS VUITTON MEN'S COAT), PHOTOGRAPHED BY JONAS UNGER.

## Meeting the Moment

HOW INCREDIBLE TO THINK THAT President Biden's Inauguration was only six months ago—it feels like a different century. The American vaccine effort has proceeded with such speed that we're headed into a summer of relative normality (I wish this were so around the world). Economic stimulus is also coming, as well as aid to families and investment in infrastructure. It's fashionable to say President Biden is boring. But I would call the pace of change under his administration electrifying.

One key member of that administration is Dr. Jill Biden, whom Jonathan Van Meter profiles for us this month—his third time writing about her for *Vogue*. “A joy multiplier,” he calls the first lady, and her infectious, unpretentious appeal is evident throughout Jonathan's wonderful profile. Equally obvious, though, is how hard she's working. Jonathan traveled with her for a month of reporting, and it seemed that he was in a different state every day—Alabama, Illinois, Arizona, New Mexico. He could hardly keep up with the first lady, who has been tirelessly promoting President Biden's agenda while continuing to teach over Zoom. (Incredibly, Dr. Biden has kept up her work as an English and writing professor.) It's the first time in modern memory we've had a first lady with a day job.

Which only goes to show how human she is, as teaching is something she clearly needs to do. If the Bidens are conducting a pomp-free presidency, it is one that seems suited to our moment. And Dr. Biden, in all her hardworking, roll-up-your-sleeves, no-nonsense appeal, is certainly the first lady that America needs now. It is



a joy to have her (photographed brilliantly by Annie Leibovitz) on our cover.

Just as in touch with our time is the designer Gabriela Hearst, who has taken over the reins at Chloé and is transforming the venerable Paris fashion house into a leader in sustainable design. In Rachel Donadio's profile, Hearst comes across as earthbound and artifice-free, someone who isn't interested in waiting around for change. Similarly restless is the brilliant French actor Omar Sy, who burst onto our small screens in Netflix's breakout smash *Lupin* and whose performances have already made waves in French cinema. I was charmed—if not surprised—to find out that Sy regularly tops most-popular lists in France. A scene-stealer par excellence.

Anahitar.

HEARST: FASHION EDITOR: CAMILLA NICKERSON, HAIR: ODILE GILBERT, MAKEUP: TOM PECHEUX, PRODUCED BY STEPHANIE O'CONNOR, SY: FASHION EDITOR: MICHAEL PHILLOUZE, HAIR: JAYR, MAKEUP: ANGLOMA, PRODUCED BY KITTEN PRODUCTION, THE BIDENS: ANNIE LEIBOVITZ, VANITY FAIR, 2017; DETAILS: SEE IN THIS ISSUE.



# N°5



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# Contributors



## Théo de Gueltzl

This month, along with shooting the model Anok Yai in some of the season's wildest (but most wearable) accessories ("The New Bags," page 72), de Gueltzl captured Gabriela Hearst, Chloé's new creative director ("This Woman's Work," page 54). "We shared a lovely morning, very early, to catch the first light," says the photographer, who is based in Paris. "We met around this weeping willow on the bank of the Seine." They connected over their love for the environment, which plays a major role in both Hearst's design sensibility and a long-simmering project of de Gueltzl's, examining "the relationships between humans and nature in ancient cultures and indigenous communities." The day, de Gueltzl says, "was a great memory."



## Jonathan Van Meter

Where Van Meter's prior profiles of Dr. Jill Biden, published in 2008 and 2019, described her life at home in Delaware, surrounded by family, a rather different tack was required for this issue's cover story, "The Doctor Is In" (page 46). Van Meter's reporting—which bade him from the Woodstock, New York, home that he shares with his husband, Andy, and their "weird cat," Timmy, to the nation's capital—found our first lady endlessly in motion. "It was all on the road," he says. "Jill was working really hard, helping to sell the American Rescue Plan, opening schools, visiting vaccination sites, and restarting Joining Forces," an initiative she'd established with Michelle Obama to support military families. The experience was a whirlwind—but some things were familiar. "She's just always this joy multiplier. Wherever she goes, she's a very, very cheerful, funny, easy person to be around," Van Meter says. "That hasn't changed at all."



## Annie Leibovitz

When, last year, *Vogue* asked Leibovitz what her life looked like in lockdown, she shared a portrait of herself doing laundry. And now? "I still do the laundry sometimes," she jokes. "The schedule is more of a hybrid. I don't spend whole days in my pajamas. There are some days in the office, some days working from home, and then sometimes on location, like for the Biden shoot." At the White House, where she shot the president and first lady for "The Doctor Is In," a surreal scene reflected the complexities of the moment. "When I met Dr. Biden for a fitting and a location scout, the furniture in the historic first-floor rooms had been placed to the side to make space for a virtual summit of world leaders on climate," Leibovitz says. "It was a high-tech event, with video monitors everywhere. Due to COVID, there were no visitors, and the White House was practically empty." (The picture at left comes from a shoot in 2017, a rather simpler time.) But, like Van Meter, Leibovitz was beguiled by Dr. Jill Biden's warmth and authenticity, even when describing the challenges of the job. "I know it is the first 100 days," she told the photographer on her husband's 96th in office, "but it already feels like 10 years."

DE GUELTZL: COURTESY OF THEO DE GUELTZL; VAN METER: JASON SCHMIDT/TRUNK ARCHIVE; LEIBOVITZ: KATHRYN MACLEOD, VANITY FAIR, 2017.





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# Bright Idea

Change up your makeup bag—and your mindset—  
with bold strokes of eye color.

Is it possible to will ourselves into thinking optimistically with a little help from eye shadow? From finely etched fluoro flicks at Christian Dior to thick wings in striking pinks and blues at Versace, the fall runways—and TikTok, that other arbiter of style—seem to suggest yes. “Last season it was all smoky eyes and black liner,” reveals makeup

artist Fara Homidi, noting the somber state of makeup as the pandemic raged on. Now, as we edge closer to a post-pandemic future, “everyone is asking for color,” she continues—and not

#### IT WAS ALL YELLOW

Hailey Bieber wears purposeful pigment and clean skin. Fashion Editor: Camilla Nickerson. Photographed by Stefan Ruiz.

subtle washes and transparent finishes but what Homidi calls “impact makeup,” like the layering effort of bright canary creams and powder pigments she applied to Hailey Bieber’s clean skin and bare lashes to telegraph a certain sunniness. “It’s definitely a mood,” she says of the effect, which inspires a once-familiar feeling: happiness. —CELIA ELLENBERG

HAIR: JIMMY PAUL; MAKEUP: FARA HOMIDI. PRODUCED BY PREISS CREATIVE. DETAILS: SEE IN THIS ISSUE.

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# Island in the Sun

After an almost decade-long gestation, Manhattan's Little Island opened this spring—a new kind of green space for an evolving city.



In 2012, Hurricane Sandy ravaged Pier 54, an unassuming strip on the West Side of Manhattan that jugged into the Hudson River near 14th Street. Once a dock for transatlantic luxury liners—the *Lusitania* departed from the pier before it met its untimely end and contributed to the start of World War I—it had become a venue for outdoor events. But following Sandy, the pier was a ragged shadow of its former self and in grave need of rehabilitation. The Hudson River Park Trust approached Barry Diller, who, with his wife, the designer and philanthropist Diane von Furstenberg, had been the single largest donor to the neighboring High Line.

Diller offered a counterproposal: What if he just tore the whole thing down and started over? He gathered theater directors Stephen Daldry, George C. Wolfe, and the late Mike Nichols to consider what a new public park that centered on the arts might look like. Nearly 10 years and \$235 million later (plus a combined contribution of \$21 million from the City of New York and the Hudson River Park Trust), Diller's vision has been realized.

Sprawled over 2.4 acres, Little Island consists of a large central lawn,

#### PIER TO PIER

The "pots" of Little Island were inspired by the old wooden piles that once linked Piers 54 and 56. Photographed by Stefan Ruiz.

about a half-mile of winding paths, stairs, boulder scrambles, a 700-person amphitheater, and several overlook points with glittering views. It undulates across 132 tulip-shaped "pots" rising out of the water (some as high as 62 feet); from below, their concrete stems are connected to pre-cast piles rooted in the river's bedrock.

Construction began, after several years of negotiations (and a few legal disputes), in 2016, overseen by both the English architecture firm Heatherwick Studio and the New York-based Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects. Nested in those pots is a kind of "maritime botanic garden," says Signe Nielsen, a founding principal at MNLA. Collectively, >30



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the landscape features more than 30 species of trees, 65 species of shrubs, nearly 300 varieties of grasses and vines, and some 66,000 bulbs. Nielsen's sense of the park crystallized a few years ago, after Diller had taken a walk through Central Park. "He said, 'Signe, I want this to be a beautiful park where people will feel comfortable and natural and like they have places to socialize and meet,'" she says. So she and her team tried to draw that sensibility out, in ways both big and small: The park's color story, for instance, evolves throughout the year—from pastels in the spring to "hotter" tones in the summer and golds and beiges in the fall. That sense of surprise permeates the artistic programming for the park as well. "You can lean on the rail from a pathway and watch what's happening



in the amphitheater," says Trish Santini, Little Island's executive director. "To me, it felt like a space that had its arms wide open." The hope is that in both its visitorship and performers, Little Island will reflect the diversity of the city. (Timed tickets are required to enter the park after 12 p.m., but events are mostly free or priced moderately.)

#### BLOOM TIME

"We have paid a lot of attention to pollinators," says landscape designer Signe Nielsen.

The timing of Little Island's much-anticipated opening this spring felt auspicious. After many long, dark months, the park was primed for wandering, picnicking, and generally rediscovering the pleasures of serendipity—one of the many casualties of our remote-everything moment. "I always believed

that at some point the damned horrible thing would end," Diller says of the pandemic's traumas, "and that when it ended, the enthusiasm of the people who love New York and who did not flee New York was going to renew it." Would it take a while? Maybe—but the wait would be well worth it.—MARLEY MARIUS

## Take Me Higher

In three new shows, characters seek a secular salvation.

A decade ago, with *Enlightened*, Mike White discerned that the path to transcendence is often paved with materialistic diversions. In his new series, *The White Lotus* (HBO), a literal boatload of drifting souls are grasping for a more grounded tether to their very glossy lives as they sail toward a luxury Hawaiian resort. Even in paradise, these guests—played by a fantastic cast including Connie Britton as a hard-driving corporate executive, Sydney Sweeney as her disaffected daughter, and Jennifer Coolidge as a teary solo traveler—keep stumbling over their own intentions, while the staff of this tiki-torch-lit retreat hustles to pick them up. The staff's own weaknesses and foibles, in turn, underline that the road to higher ground is a rough and winding one, no matter where you're starting.

In Netflix's *The Chair*, Sandra Oh stars as the freshly appointed head of a disintegrating college English department. Enrollment is down; a handful of dinosaur professors have not updated their syllabi for decades; and her closest friend and potential paramour—a rumpled Jay Duplass—cannot seem to make it to his own lectures on time. An older generation (mostly male, mostly white) have long stuck their heads in the sand, and Oh's character has been rewarded for her years of scrambling with the unglamorous task of digging them out. A gentle-hearted



#### SYNC OR SWIM

FROM LEFT: Sydney Sweeney, Brittany O'Grady, and Alexandra Daddario in *The White Lotus*.

satire, *The Chair* is neither condemnatory nor celebratory, but rather a sweetly sardonic depiction of campus life, where truth is hard to find.

In the latest star-vehicle for Nicole Kidman, *Nine Perfect Strangers* (Hulu), she plays a seraphic guru presiding over a secluded retreat where a cadre of broken people have gathered to skinny-dip, guzzle tropical smoothies, and investigate their dysfunction. There are other motives at play, however, and even in the sparkling sunlight, things begin to get a little dark. The ominous overtones can't dispel the series's lush appeal, though. As in *Big Little Lies*, which was written by the same novelist, Liane Moriarty, and adapted by the same team, suffering has never looked so good.—CHLOE SCHAMA

TOP: PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEFAN RUIZ, PRODUCED BY PREISS CREATIVE. BOTTOM: MARIO PEREZ/HBO.



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# Ground Support

Beauty's latest It ingredient is gaining cultural cachet for its essential role in nature—and in nurturing tinctures and toners.



If you have sought out less-populated pastures over the past year, then you are likely familiar with *All That the Rain Promises*. The 30-year-old field guide to Western mushrooms (including recipes for food and hair dye) doesn't have Didion's prose or the urgency of a Michael Lewis exposé; but for a certain subsection of eco-curious hipster, it has become *the* housewarming gift for friends who have traded in city life for country living. Mushrooms—which are not plants or animals but fungi that constitute their own kingdom, with more than 10,000 different species—are having their cultural moment, and not just psychedelic varieties. Locally sourced morels and chanterelles are turning up on fine-dining menus; in March, Hermès announced that it would release an eco-friendly version of its classic Victoria travel bag made from sustainable mushroom-derived leather; and before there were octopus teachers, *Fantastic Fungi* became a cult hit on the small screen. “One of the big takeaways of the pandemic is that communities survive better than individuals,” says the film's director, Louis Schwartzberg, pointing to the appeal of mushrooms' underground threadlike cells, which connect the roots of surrounding plants, allowing them to share nutrients and communicate. A cruise through Whole Foods suggests mycology's influence on wellness, that other pandemic-era obsession, is similarly compelling.

As newly buzzy, immunomodulating species become a part of the better-living vernacular—Reishi! Chaga! Cordyceps! Lion's mane! Turkey tail!—there seems to be a mushroom-based supplement, tincture, tea, and now face mask to cure whatever ails you. Four Sigmatic, the Finnish brand that has popularized a mushroom-based adaptogen coffee substitute, launched its Superfood Face

Mask last year with hydrating reishi and clarifying chaga that purport to soothe the skin, featuring a formula that is “so pure you can eat it.”

“Reishi and cordyceps have long been used in traditional Chinese medicine to boost the body's qi, or energy, and strengthen its ability to function well,” explains Sandra Lanshin Chiu, a licensed acupuncturist and herbalist and the owner of Brooklyn's Treatment by Lanshin. Chiu, who often prescribes custom tinctures with these ingredients to clients—to reduce stress, inflammation, and fatigue—is wary of the modern marketing boom. But mushrooms' allure as a panacea is growing—and it isn't unwarranted, says Kevin Spellman, Ph.D. “Fungi have beta-glucans—or messenger molecules—that carry information to the immune system to turn it up a bit or turn it down a bit,” explains Spellman, a molecular biologist and herbalist who recently collaborated with the San Francisco-based skin-care line In Fiore on three new tinctures, including Adapt'Ascend, which includes reishi to energize or relax you.

“I see this as an exciting moment in the reevaluation of mushrooms”—in skin care and in our society at large, adds Andrew Weil, M.D., an integrative-medicine practitioner and a pioneer in the space. (The anti-redness Mega Mushroom treatment lotion he created with Origins 15 years ago is now the brand's number-one global best seller). “Mushrooms may offer us even more exciting possibilities in the future,” Weil adds—beyond the brave new world of vegan Birkins.—MARISA MELTZER

## SHROOM SERVICE

From anti-inflammatory reishi to antioxidant-boosting chaga, mushrooms are becoming a big part of the better-living vernacular.

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#### SLEIGHT OF HAND

Vuitton's Fornasetti collaboration (Malle Pyramide bags, LEFT, and on the runway, RIGHT) captures the élan of work like the City of Cards screen (circa 1950s), CENTER.

# The Myth and the Magic

Nicolas Ghesquière's Louis Vuitton collection draws on the whimsy of Piero Fornasetti—and catches the more-is-more mood of the moment.

Nicolas Ghesquière had an epiphany when visiting the Michelangelo Gallery at the Louvre for Louis Vuitton's fall 2021 show: The space, with its stunning sculptures from the Italian Renaissance, brought to mind the work of the sui generis artist and designer Piero Fornasetti.

Celebrated for his furniture and ceramic designs, Fornasetti began his career in the 1930s in fashion, making headscarves that mixed innovative printing techniques with pochoir and hand-painting. The scarves drew the eye of the great designer Gio Ponti, and the two collaborated on some iconic pieces of midcentury furniture that revealed Fornasetti's mastery of ancient crafts, embrace of innovation, and impressive archive of historic visual references.

In the postmodern 1980s, Fornasetti's "Tema E Variazioni" plates—more than 300 versions of an engraving of the belle époque beauty Lina Cavalieri's face—were must-have

accessories. I owned some myself, and regularly sleuthed for treasures in Fornasetti's crowded Milan boutique.

In preparation for this new capsule collection, some of which was part of the runway show, Ghesquière and his team explored the extensive Fornasetti archives, "searching," as he notes, "for images centered on antique statues, cameo portraits, and architecture." The results—from fashion to purses and luggage—reflect the joyous optimism of fashion as we continue to reemerge from the pandemic. (See our New Bags story, page 72, for more examples.) "We had lots of fun creating trompe l'oeil," says Ghesquière, "challenging the materials and techniques...."

"I like the interpretation," says Barnaba Fornasetti, guardian of the brand since his father's death in 1988. "Using the past, renovating, interpreting is like the more recent DJs, who use something existing, remix it, and come out with totally original music." The results, he adds, feel "very modern, very futuristic."—HAMISH BOWLES

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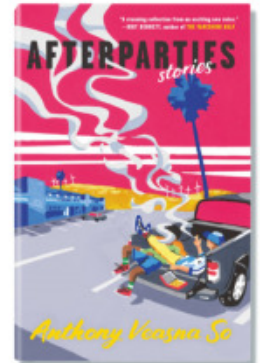
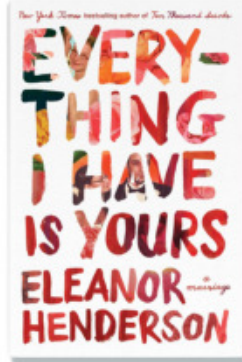
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# Some Like It Hot

A summer of love plays out in the month's best books.



**Ghosts (Knopf), by Dolly Alderton** The action in *Ghosts*, an astonishingly assured debut novel, takes place after Nina George Dean turns 32. She's a writer with a London flat that she adores, a new book in the works, two well-meaning parents, and a circle of close friends that includes an ex with whom she's unproblematically close. When Nina meets the doting and superhero-handsome Max, she can't believe her luck. But her house of cards soon starts to cave: Her dad's health takes a turn; the proposal for her next book isn't coming together; and after several blissful months, she's getting radio silence from Max. Deftly observed and deeply funny, *Ghosts* considers, with what might well be described as haunting precision, where we find—and how we hold on to—love.—MARLEY MARIUS

**Agatha of Little Neon (FSG), by Claire Luchette** In this romance centered on an elusive figure of a different sort, Agatha, a nun, is transplanted, along with her pious sisters, to a half-way house in the “tuckered-out town” of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. (Little Neon is the former convent turned bridge housing for recovering addicts and ex-cons, so named because it's painted the color of Mountain Dew.) What follows is an eccentric coming-of-age story in which Agatha, attracted to the order for its promise of both belonging and obscurity, begins to learn that true comfort lies not in conformity but in awareness of her

own instincts. Written in a bracing, acerbic, and darkly comic register, the book is a surprisingly buoyant read, a sly investigation of the meaning of devotion.—CHLOE SCHAMA

**Everything I Have Is Yours: A Marriage (Flatiron), by Eleanor Henderson** Memoirs of marriages are like confessions—the more honest, the better. And this one is ruthless. The love story is there: Eleanor falls hard for Aaron in a record shop in Florida in 1997. She is 17. He is a 25-year-old straight-edge dreamboat, “teeth as white as his T-shirt.” She brings him to college and then to graduate school. Eleanor is ambitious, upwardly mobile. Aaron is mercurial, wounded, seemingly unemployable, and given to secrets. She builds a life; he tears it apart with his mood swings and his strange ailments. A medical mystery develops—does he have Morgellons? Schizophrenia? Some other psychiatric condition? Or is there something darker going on—addiction? *Leave him*, the reader thinks. But life, of course, is not so simple, and rarely has codependency been chronicled with such precision, such poignancy.—TAYLOR ANTRIM

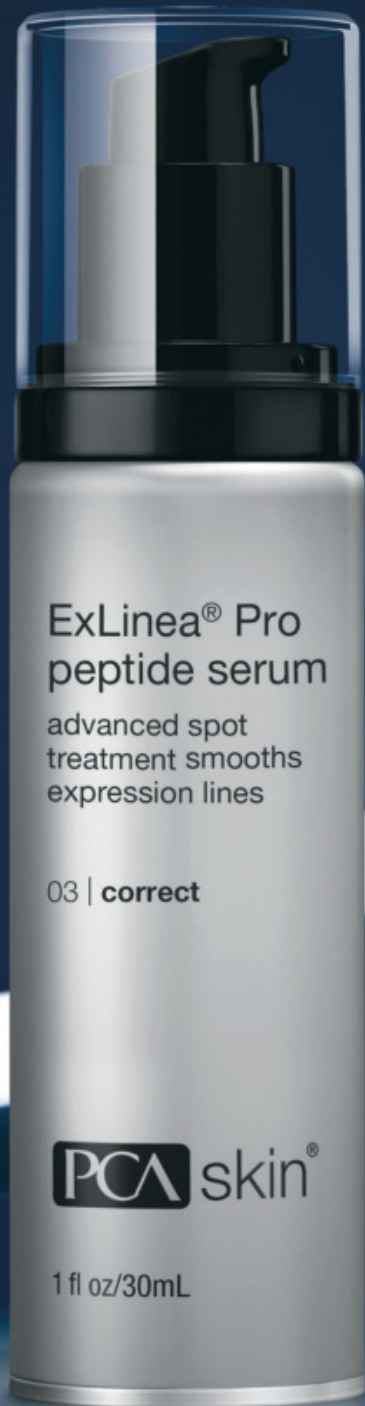
**The Paper Palace (Riverhead), by Miranda Cowley Heller** In the midst of a dinner party in the backwoods of Cape Cod, Elle steps into the shadows and consummates a long-simmering love affair. The next morning she declares it “the end of a long story,”

though the encounter marks the start of this beguiling book, which unfolds amid the ponds and poison ivy covering the Cape. Toggling between decades, the novel charts a wandering course among the scruffy socialites who populate this gin-soaked landscape: salty women in their muumuus, men who treat divorce as “just a seven-letter word,” kids largely ignored. Elle, with her loving husband and three children, seems to have charted a more committed path, but her fleeting infidelity—and the sultry memories it provokes—illustrates how even the most staid life can take an unpredictable tack.—c.s.

**Afterparties (Ecco), by Anthony Veasna So** A series of vignettes documenting the lives and loves of Cambodian-Americans in California, *Afterparties* ricochets between meditations on food and family, an eclectic array of pop-culture references and the emotional legacy of those who fled the Khmer Rouge. So's observations on queer life are particularly incisive: In one instance, a charming love story blossoms between a righteous tech entrepreneur and a young teacher, with the couple finding a strange poetry in the rhythms and routines of casual sex. These intimate windows into this particular immigrant experience leave a powerful imprint, even if reading So's work is tinged with sadness. The author, who died suddenly last year at the age of 28, clearly had so much left to say.—LIAM HESS

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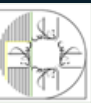
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# Dinner on Demand

At once elaborate and streamlined, the party-in-a-box might mark a new mode of entertaining.

I spent my 28th birthday on my couch, binge-watching Netflix and fantasizing about cake. It was March of 2020, and my local grocery store had run out of eggs, sugar, and flour. It was a minor grievance in the scheme of things. But come 2021, it wasn't exactly something I wanted to repeat. So it was with the grace of Dionysus that a few weeks before my second pandemic birthday, I stumbled upon Savour. An app that allows users to book chefs—from restaurants like

Eleven Madison Park, Momofuku, and Noma—Savour also arranges everything from menus to table mats. A few taps of my phone and I'd booked a family-style meal by chef Akiko Thurnauer, formerly of Nobu. The next Thursday, she knocked on my door, hot-pink eye shadow swiped across her eyes and a basket of Bao buns on her arm.

Right now, in many places, we're in an awkward phase of socializing. After a year and a half of pandemic living, most of us are desperate to see people beyond our bubble. As Bronson van Wyck, author of *Born to Party, Forced to Work*, sums it up: "We're all ready for a true rager. Parties—actual full-on parties—have been in a medically induced coma." Such gatherings are not just frivolous entertainment—they are crucial to our well-being: "Much of what fulfills us are the bonds we create with other people, and more often than not, those bonds materialize through physical interactions," wrote researchers in an August 2020 study titled "The Dangers of Social Distancing." And yet, many of us may feel a lingering discomfort at the prospect of sharing respiratory droplets in the name of celebration. Social gatherings may remain, for some, domestic.

Thankfully, a set of new party services is stepping in to elevate at-home entertaining. In addition to Savour, there's Celebration

## BOWLED OVER

A tablescape from Party by Numbers (TOP), a dish designed by chef Yann Nury (MIDDLE), and a setting from Celebration Home (BOTTOM).



Home, which was created by event planner Jennifer Zabinski and Met-gala caterer Olivier Cheng and which offers packages like "A Night at the Opera" or "Around the Farmer's Market." They'll send you everything you need in a giant box—from the asparagus tarte tatin to the Jardin du Luxembourg scent diffuser. "It's like your own little salon," says Zabinski. The new company Party by Numbers will pack a midcentury bar cart with everything from the

Aperol aperitif to the olive-branch arrangement to the Bose speakers piping in the sounds of the Sanremo Music Festival. Recently they got the approval of the James Beard Foundation's Zero Foodprint organization for their carbon-neutral measures.

Then there's the fashionable fleet of mobile mixologists. The Maybourne Beverly Hills in Los Angeles fits an entire bar in the back of an Escalade that it can dispatch to your driveway. Meanwhile, famed French chef Yann Nury has turned his 1985 Land Rover into a roaming happy hour, making stops in the Hamptons, Nantucket, and Rhode Is-



land. For a little extra, he'll tow along his vintage Airstream, retro-formatted with a wood-fire grill.

Will these services eventually become fossils of the Fauci era? "I think over the past year, people really learned—and fell in love with—the joys of home entertaining," says Party by Numbers cofounder Nicky Balestrieri. The pandemic, if anything, taught us how a few close relationships can sustain the soul more potently than a dozen diffuse ones. "Hospitality—the act of breaking bread together—has in many ways never been more present," muses van Wyck, "with one key difference: It's more-is-more for the people who matter the most." —ELISE TAYLOR







In the spring of 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic was taking hold, *Vogue* asked designers, photographers, artists, editors, and models (and a few celebrities) to reveal what their lives looked like under lockdown. The result was an extraordinary series of self-created images, interviews, and essays, now brought together in one volume. *Postcards From Home* marks a moment of profound change and serves as a stunning document of creativity thriving through crisis.

BY THE EDITORS OF *VOGUE* FOREWORD BY ANNA WINTOUR

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# Moon Shot

Thirteen Lune, an ambitious new beauty e-commerce platform, aims to elevate BIPOC founders and the idea of self-care for all.



Last summer, Nyakio Grieco had a watershed moment. While interest in Black-owned brands was on the rise, it was kind of hard to actually *find* them. So Grieco—a beauty entrepreneur who in 2002 launched a line of coffee bean- and sugar-based exfoliators inspired by the Kenyan skin-care secrets passed down to her by her grandmother—teamed up with size-inclusivity pioneer and 11 Honoré founder Patrick Herning to launch Thirteen Lune: an e-commerce site that focuses on a hyperedited curation of BIPOC-owned beauty brands.

It's an exciting proposition for someone like, say, me, who has always had a fraught relationship with beauty. After years of painstakingly seeking out products with the appropriate undertones for my brown skin and shampoos that wouldn't turn my scalp into the Sahara, I still deal with psoriasis, traction alopecia, and extreme hair breakage. "As a Black woman, I've been buying products made by people who are not Black or brown my whole life with the expectation and assumption that they're going to work on my hair and skin," says Grieco, echoing my own frustration and that of so many Black women. We pour roughly \$54.4 million into beauty products each year but still face hurdles to access, especially to luxury products.

The 64 BIPOC-owned brands carried by Thirteen Lune, which is named for a sacred number in some African cultures and the 13 moons in a calendar year, offer more than just a vetted curation: They offer a sense of discovery and novelty, itself a luxury for women of color. On the site I found British hairstylist Charlotte Mensah's hydrating shampoo that is rich in Namibian manketti oil, but I also learned about KéNisha Ruff's journey from Wisconsin cosmetologist to founder and creative director of Marie Hunter Beauty.

"It really comes to life with the founders," says Grieco, who is hoping to both elevate these products and amplify the voices behind them—Black, brown, and otherwise. This spring, Grieco and Herning introduced an allyship program designed to change the conversation around accountability in the beauty industry by welcoming brands that have always prioritized inclusive formulas, such as Leland Francis's natural skin-care collection and Holi-Frog's range of cleansers. "These brands were created by people who aren't Black or brown, but they're committed to addressing the needs of melanin-rich skin and textured hair," Grieco explains, noting that 90 percent of the site is still dedicated to BIPOC-backed products. In exchange for digital real estate, these more established companies will help mentor emerging brands.

It's this kind of forward thinking that has attracted investors including Gwyneth Paltrow and Sean Combs, who will guest-star on a just-launched Thirteen Lune podcast that hopes to unpack that other beauty buzzword: self-care. "Black and brown communities are very underserved when it comes to messaging about self-care and nontoxic ingredients, so there is a tremendous opportunity for us to educate around that issue," says Grieco, a sentiment that resonated with me as I unscrewed the cap of Liha Beauty's Idan Oil. Its creamy tuberose scent transported me a world away from my Brooklyn apartment, and I was reminded of how rarely I make time for myself. Rarer still is that I'm encouraged to do so.—JANELLE OKWODU

## ALL THE FEELS

With its hyperedited curation, the site is selling the joy of discovering BIPOC-backed beauty products and the voices behind them.

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# The Doctor Is In

Famously empathetic and free of pomp, Dr. Jill Biden is the hardworking, heart-on-her-sleeve, everywhere-at-once first lady that America needs now. By Jonathan Van Meter. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz.



# When Jill Biden visits community colleges,

which is a lot these days, she is received in highly choreographed settings by a governor, say, or members of the public as the nation's first lady. But to administrators and teachers, she is Dr. Jill Biden, college professor. At Sauk Valley Community College in Illinois, there were pink and white flowers set out everywhere, befitting her visit; they even matched her white dress and pink jacket. But there was also a WELCOME DR. BIDEN sign so huge that the period on the *Dr.* was as big as her head. It felt like a subtle rebuke to that scolding she was subjected to back in December for using the title she has every right to.

Indeed, in all the places she goes lately she is honored as a woman with several degrees who has worked really hard her whole life at the most respectable job there is. Everyone has a favorite teacher, after all. On her visit to the Navajo Nation in April, Dr. Biden was introduced by someone I came to think of as the Ruth Bader Ginsburg of Indian Country: chief justice of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court JoAnn Jayne, a tiny woman with hair pulled back in a tight ponytail, wearing Doc Martens: "Dr. Biden, millions reap inspiration from your quote 'Teaching isn't just what I do; it is who I am.'" In Birmingham, Alabama, she was introduced by a lawyer, Liz Huntley, a sexual-abuse survivor whose parents were drug dealers. "I want to thank Dr. Biden from the bottom of my heart for the role that she plays not just as the first lady...but for her heart for educating. She told me she's grading papers on the plane, y'all! *What?* Who does that?! You know, they say being an educator is a calling...in your life that you can't resist, and she just won't let it go."

The December debate over titles seems awfully small in the face of all of this: Jill Biden opening schools, visiting vaccination sites, traveling to red states to sell the American Rescue Plan, telling folks that "help is here." The role she's fulfilling on these visits is, in many ways, neither first lady nor professor but a key player in her husband's administration, a West Wing surrogate and policy advocate. "An underestimated asset," as Mary Jordan, the *Washington Post* reporter who's written a book about Melania Trump, put it to me. "It's hard to imagine Joe doing this without her."

Which is not to say that Dr. Biden, who is constitutionally shy, doesn't take special delight in these visits. She becomes

"Oh, please, call me Jill," she will say to people in formal settings who sometimes stumble over how to address her

looser, goofier, and more expansive. You generally hear her before you see her because she is often laughing. She is, quite simply, a joy multiplier. As part of her elevator pitch for free community college—part of the \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan President Biden proposed to Congress in April—she likes to talk about one of her most dedicated students, a military interpreter from Afghanistan who came to America to start a new life. "A few semesters ago...I got a text from her—it was like six o'clock in the morning. 'On my way to the hospital to have my baby, research paper will be late.' To which I replied, *Excuses, excuses.*" It gets a big laugh, even from the jaded press corps.

No one thought she could keep teaching. "I heard that all the time during the campaign," she told me. "Like, 'No. You're not going to be able to teach as first lady.' And I said, 'Why not? You make things happen, right?'" But as I traveled with Dr. Biden through much of April, I saw just how much time her day job took up: In Albuquerque, New Mexico, the entire retinue of staff, Secret Service, and press held at our hotel until well into the afternoon, when the motorcade finally hit the road for a nearly three-hour drive and a long evening of events in Arizona—because Dr. B was teaching her classes over Zoom. On a trip to Illinois, her motorcade sped toward the airport as if there weren't a second to waste. Because there wasn't: Jill had to teach!

Meanwhile, countless editorials began marking the first 100 days of the Biden administration, many expressing surprised relief over how much was getting done, how

much legitimately helpful policy was moving through the system, how little drama, how few flubs or fumbles or ugly fights. Joe Biden is *boring*—and that's not a complaint. One day, I asked Dr. Biden about the mood of the country. "During the campaign, I felt so much anxiety from people;

they were scared," she told me. "When I travel around the country now, I feel as though people can breathe again. I think that's part of the reason Joe was elected. People wanted someone to come in and heal this nation, not just from the pandemic, which I feel Joe did by, you know, getting shots in everybody's arms. But also...he's just a *calmer* president. He lowers the temperature."

Part of what makes the Bidens' right-out-of-the-gate successes so extraordinary is that they seem to have perfectly read the room: We have been through this enormous, collective trauma, and here's a calm, experienced, empathetic president, and here's a first lady who is driven, tireless, effortlessly popular, but also someone who reminds us of ourselves. She's selling a new vision for how our most fundamental institutions ought to work—infrastructure, education, public health—even as she goes to extraordinary lengths to keep a real-world job, to stay in touch with what makes her human and what matters most.

Now it is May, an unseasonably hot Tuesday afternoon, and I'm sitting with Dr. Biden under a white trellis in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, just outside the East Wing of the White House. She is wearing a red dress and red pumps. Finals were last week; the semester is over. Phew.



Today—teacher-appreciation day, as it happens—is the first Tuesday since moving into the White House that she did not have her writing class (one of three she taught this semester at Northern Virginia Community College). She already misses her students, who were, for whatever reason, mostly men this semester. “Maybe two months ago they said, ‘Hey, Dr. B.... Can we ask you a question?’” I said yeah. They said, ‘When we write in our journals, can we curse?’”

They were worried it was inappropriate because you’re the first lady?

“I don’t know what they thought! We never said the words *first lady* ever. So I said, ‘Yes, you can curse.’ Because I tell them they can write *anything*. And here they are, these young men, like, ‘Yes! We can curse!’ I loved that. After that class, I felt...good. I’ve achieved what I wanted to achieve: They see me as their English teacher.”

Protecting this part of her life is “an underappreciated big deal,” says the journalist Evan Osnos, author of the recent *Joe Biden: The Life, the Run, and What Matters Now*. “Because, you know, the isolation and the seclusion and the degree to which that job messes with your head...it’s real. So to be able to step out of that, to be able to negotiate her way out of that, I’m sure, took some stubbornness—productive stubbornness.”

He adds that she has a kind of “fortitude that most people didn’t really pay that much attention to”—and this is something I saw on the road. I watched her hold the hands of nervous women in Albuquerque as the vaccine needles went in their arms. (“Look at me,” said Dr. Biden. “It doesn’t hurt. Really. It’s mostly in your head.”) She is the designated driver on the piece of the American Families Plan meant to cut child poverty in half. She is working in tandem with the Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, “reimagining our education system from preschool to college.”

She has also restarted Joining Forces, the military family-support initiative she launched with Michelle Obama 10 years ago. And it won’t be long before her East Wing operation, which is still staffing up, plans state dinners and cultural events, fussing over menus and seating charts and Christmas decorations, because someone still has to be the nation’s hostess at the end of the day.

It’s a lot, I say. “Well, don’t you think that I always had a lot going on? I like that kind of energy,” she says. “When I became second lady—and there was so much I wanted to do—I always said, ‘I will never waste this platform.’” Most people had only a vague idea of who Jill Biden was during those years, except sort of maybe knowing that there was a nice teacher lady who was married to the vice president. I’d written two profiles of her, and even I was surprised

to learn that she traveled to nearly 40 countries as second lady. “And now I have a bigger platform,” she says, “and I feel every day, like... What could I give up? That I would *want* to give up? Nothing. If anything, I feel like adding more things, but I know it’s not possible, because you want to stay centered, because you want to do things well. And there’s so much to do. There is...so. *Much. To. Do.*”

Dr. Biden’s trip to the Navajo Nation was, in fact, her third official visit to the tribal land—a fact that was lost on no one. (Business leader and Navajo advocate Clara Pratte says, “As someone who has worked in this field for a long time, I can tell you: This is not the norm. But it should be the norm.”) Dr. Biden’s last trip was two years ago, when

she came to open “the very first cancer-treatment center on any American Indian reservation,” as the Navajo Nation’s first lady, Phefelia Nez, pointed out. Her husband, President Jonathan Nez, added that it was the Navajo Nation that helped put Biden over the top in Arizona, with “60, 70, even 80 percent turnout in some places.” There is a Navajo word, *jooba’ii*, that sounds like “Joe Biden” and means *compassion*, he said. “That’s how a lot of our elders remembered it at the polls.”

Distances here are vast. The Navajo reservation is larger than West Virginia, with nearly 400,000 members. One of the pool photographers told me that in

his 15 years of covering the White House, the nearly three-hour motorcade ride from Albuquerque was the longest he’d ever taken—an indication of the slog and why hardly anyone at Jill Biden’s level ever comes to visit. But the way she was received here was beyond touching. She gave a live radio address in front of the red sandstone arch—Window Rock—after which the tribal capital is named. As the sun was setting, and the speeches from the nation’s dignitaries dragged on, the temperature plummeted and the wind picked up—it quickly became teeth-chattering cold. Jill, who was wearing a dark suit with nude pumps and bare legs, looked like she was going to freeze to death. Someone came over and draped a Navajo blanket around her, which happened to perfectly match her Jimmy Choos, enveloping her like a sleeping bag. “We heard it here today,” said Seth Damon, the speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, from the stage. “You are a fierce warrior.”

“It was more than cold!” says Biden when I ask her about that evening. “Oh, I couldn’t stop my knees from shaking.” She laughs. “Didn’t it feel emotional to you? It wasn’t just a visit. I feel a real emotional connection to the Navajo Nation. They knew I was cold, and the woman came up behind me and put that blanket around me. They *cared* about me.”



#### FAMILY VALUES

Dr. Biden with her grandchildren, Naomi, Finnegan, Hunter, Maisy, and Natalie, in Delaware. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz, *Vogue*, 2019.





#### STOLEN MOMENT

The first couple on a patio off the Oval Office. Dr. Biden wears a Michael Kors Collection sweater and skirt

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“During the campaign, I felt so much anxiety from people; they were scared,” she told me. “When I travel around the country now, I feel as though people can breathe again”







**T**he night before I started following Jill Biden around the country, I decided to take a walk around the newly fortified White House to figure out exactly how to get in the next morning. I was dumbfounded to see the brutal black fencing, as high as the towering old trees, and to realize how far I would have to walk to get to the checkpoint, like something out of Cold War Berlin. The White House perimeter keeps pushing farther out—security creep, with all of the attendant police-state vibes—scooping up ever more of the city grid.

But once I was inside the White House the next morning, I was greeted by nothing more forbidding than a bunch of nice, nerdy career D.C. people—*working*. That day Dr. Biden was giving a speech for the Joining Forces relaunch in an empty auditorium in the Old Executive Office Building, next to the West Wing. A handful of press, staff, and Secret Service would be on hand, but no eager, tittering audience, thrilled to be invited to the White House—only the now-familiar wall of human video tiles behind the podium. When Dr. Biden appeared onstage, a production person’s voice came over the sound system: “Whenever you’re ready to go ahead and start....” She gathered herself and launched in. “This work is *personal* to me,” she said. “My dad was a Navy signalman in World War II and went to college on the GI Bill. His love for this

#### MAKING TIME

“We still light the candles, still have the conversations, still put the phones away,” she says. In this story: hair, Sally Hershberger; makeup, Francelle Daly. Details, see In This Issue.

country was a part of everything he did, and he inspired us, his five daughters, to see America through his eyes.”

When she finished, she silently walked off the stage. “And so we begin!” she said to no one in particular, and then laughed. In many ways, Dr. Biden is perfectly calibrated for this moment—thus far, a nearly pomp-free presidency. “Oh, please, call me Jill,” she will say to people in formal settings who sometimes stumble over how to address her. “Sit *down*,” she says, laughing, when people stand for a second too long in her presence. “There’s an unadorned thing that I think she values,” says Osnos. “And she’s quite suspicious of artifice in others.”

After the speech, her 12-car motorcade, sirens blaring, sped across the Potomac to Arlington, Virginia. (I said to her, “It must be exhausting to always travel at the speed of motorcade.” “It’s funny,” she replied. “On the way to the airport, I said to Joe, ‘Where’s all the traffic?’ And then I realized...oh, yeah, they *stop* the traffic.”) In Arlington, she would be greeted by Charlene Austin, the wife of the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, among others, to take a tour of Military OneSource, a resource hub and call center for service members and their families. Among the





White House reporters following her today—all women, many of whom covered the Trump administration—there was a lot of chatter, almost complaint, about how much more information they now receive: so many emails! Full readouts of calls President Biden has with foreign leaders arrive in their inbox the same day—as opposed to five days later with just one sentence saying that it happened, which was usually as good as it got with the Trump folks.

As Dr. Biden toured the call center, a woman who works here thanked her for her time and attention. “No,” said Dr. Biden, “thank you. We need you. Really. These families are desperate...if your child is not happy, your whole world just falls apart. You’re giving them hope and joy.” As the tour was ending, she talked to a member of the military who told her that he used the call center to find a counselor when he and his wife were having a “very hard time adjusting to military life.” “Did you go into counseling with your spouse as well?” asked Jill. Not at first, he said, but eventually. “Well, you *have* to,” she said. “You’re in a *relationship*.”

Two days later, the first lady was on yet another trip—to Birmingham, Alabama, quite purposely traveling to a red state as part of the “Help Is Here” tour, meant to amplify how the American Rescue Plan addresses child poverty. In nearly every way, it felt like a campaign stop: a speech in a gymnasium in a YWCA, with local dignitaries, like former Democratic senator Doug Jones, and a speech from Birmingham’s mayor, Randall Woodfin. But it was Congresswoman Terri Sewell, in her bubble-gum-pink suit, who stole the show with her volume and intensity. “I am so proud to have been the only Democrat in Alabama’s delegation to vote in favor of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan,” she said on-stage. She talked about the big infusions of money the state, county, and city would soon be receiving. She talked about the child tax credit, how the Biden administration is “expanding it, by providing direct payments in the form of a child allowance. This year, families will receive \$3,600 *per child* under the age of six and \$3,000 per child between the ages of six and 17.” (The checks, for more than 65 million children, begin landing in people’s bank accounts in July.) “*This is a big plan*.... Good governance creates an environment that allows all of our people—all of our people—to reach their full potential.”

On the flight home to D.C., Dr. Biden came to the back of the plane for an off-the-record gaggle. It’s something I saw over and over again—her solicitousness with reporters, the times she apologized for keeping us waiting. “I’m trying to get to know them,” she told me later. “Because I don’t think it should be, you know, me versus the press.” She also sat down next to me for a few minutes to say hello. She had heard from one of her staffers that my mother died recently—from cancer—but what she didn’t know is that she died on the Saturday after the election in November, the very day her husband was declared the winner. Who can say why some people seem to have extra capacity to feel other people’s sorrow, but there I was, in front of group of strangers, becoming

emotional as I relayed this coincidence of timing. When I composed myself, I looked up at Jill, and she, too, had tears in her eyes.

**I**t’s very early on a stormy Monday morning in early May at Joint Base Andrews, and the press corps that follows the president (mostly middle-aged white guys) is standing under one of the wings of Air Force One trying to keep dry. When Marine One—the helicopter that flies the president from the White House to his plane—lands and then roars up to disgorge POTUS and FLOTUS (and the man carrying the football), it feels like a show of muscularity that is particular to the United States—one that is no longer in the hands of someone for whom that seemed to matter too much and for all the wrong reasons. The quasi-march across the tarmac, the crisp salute to the commanders and sergeants in place to greet him—it suits Joe, in his aviators, so tall and thin in his impeccable blue suit.

The president and first lady are traveling to southern Virginia today, a double act, both of them to give speeches meant to highlight the Biden administration’s jobs

“She came in knowing the experience of being vice president,” says Biden, “knowing the power of the presidency—knowing that she could change things”

and families plan. Their first stop is at a magnet school, Yorktown Elementary—and Mrs. Bertamini’s fifth-grade class in particular. There are 18 students in their third week of in-person learning. All of them have three-sided plexiglass shields perched on their desks, along with elaborate weather-related science projects they’ve just completed. Press and staff, who are cordoned off in a corner of the room, outnumber the

students, who seem startled into silent amazement by this once-in-a-lifetime intrusion into their precarious world.

After the Bidens enter the classroom—introduced as the Very Special Guests they most certainly are—Jill makes a beeline for a girl in the back of the room and then heads over to a student named Andrew. She hovers over his project, asks a series of thoughtful questions, while her husband, shifting from one foot to the other, looks a little out of place—letting the wife take the lead on this one. Not a chance. “Come on, Joe!” says Jill, waving him over. He hesitates for a moment and then, perhaps realizing there are cameras trained on him, takes control. “What do you want to be when you grow up?” he says to one of the kids.

“Fashion designer,” says the student. He turns to another kid. “How about you?” A music artist mumble-mumble-mumble. “A what?” Someone on his staff says it louder: *A MUSIC ARTIST*. “Well, I’ll be darned!” says the president. “And you?” A hairstylist, says the kid. “Holy mackerel!”

Everyone piles back into the 20-plus-car motorcade, and off we go, passing clusters of people now lining the roads, everyone with cell phones up, many of them waving. “At least they’re waving at us now and not giving us the finger,” says one of the photographers. Suddenly the whole caravan comes to a stop. Word comes through that Joe wants to say hello to the students and teachers who have gathered in front of a high school, CONTINUED ON PAGE 100

Gabriela Hearst's arrival at Chloé has ushered in a whole new era for the French house. On the eve of Hearst's debut, Rachel Donadio meets a designer intent on creating with clear-minded purpose. Portrait by Théo de Gueltzl.

# This Woman's Work

**O**N A SUNNY WINTER AFTERNOON IN Paris, Gabriela Hearst, the new creative director of Chloé, buzzes around the house's atelier in the 8th arrondissement. She's about to present her first Chloé collection with an atmospheric video shot at night in pandemic-empty Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and models are parading into a room lined with racks of clothes while assistants in masks put the finishing touches on each look: There's a flowy marbled red-and-green silk crepe dress, a chunky knit ankle-length dress, a long coat of scalloped brown-leather scales that looks, in the best way, like Joni Mitchell might have worn it in 1971. Every so often, someone asks Hearst a question, and she nods and offers a "*Oui, merci*" in slightly Spanish-accented French. "My French is '*Oui, merci*,'" Hearst says, a bit apologetically, as she urges me to feel a soft, thick poncho made from recycled cashmere with a zippered parka neck.

Reusing existing materials to make impeccably tailored new creations is classic Hearst. Raised on a cattle ranch in her native Uruguay—hence the ponchos—and married to a scion of one of the most storied families in America, Hearst, who founded her eponymous label in 2015, has come to embody a certain kind of intelligent, sustainable luxury. She communicates an urgency around the climate crisis—but she does so with elegance, joie de vivre, and something of a frontier spirit. Hearst's mandate at Chloé is to bring a current of engagé environmentalism and purpose to a house—previously led by the likes of Karl Lagerfeld, Stella McCartney, and Phoebe Philo—known for a vision of carefree yet clever French femininity.

Hearst's first collection, unveiled in early March, struck that balance beautifully. It uses the language of Chloé—broderie anglaise, scallops, a soft color palette—while dramatically scaling back on synthetic fabrics, adding more knitwear, and focusing on upcycling and transparency about the supply chain.

"I didn't expect there would be so much of her handwriting so quickly," says Natalie Kingham, the global fashion officer for MatchesFashion, who singles out the knitwear and the ponchos with parka collars. Hearst, she says, has offered "a very elegant, grown-up version" of the Chloé woman, who, while free-spirited, also wants to know where her clothes come from. "I think that's how women want to feel and want to look," Kingham says. "They want to wear clothes that are going to get them through the day, but in an ethical way—a way that makes them feel wonderful."

Hearst designed the collection in record time and showed it only three months after being named to the job, while also running her own label. She keeps a dry, playful sense of humor about the insanely intense schedule. "I'm not creatively unsatisfied," she tells me as we sit on the sidelines of the atelier. When Hearst was named to Chloé last December, many wondered why she would want the job. She already had her own successful house, which has become popular with powerful women like Dr. Jill Biden, who wore a white Hearst dress with floral embroidery on the night of her husband's inauguration and a navy iteration for his first address to Congress. While women are often held to a different standard than men when it comes to juggling careers and families, taking on a second job, in Paris, was still a lot for Hearst, who lives in Manhattan's West Village with her husband, John Augustine Hearst—who goes by Austin and is an executive and a grandson of William Randolph Hearst—their six-year-old son, Jack, and her 13-year-old twins, Mia and Olivia, from her first marriage.

When I ask Hearst why she wanted the job, her answer is both clear and direct. "Because I knew I could do it,"

## PARIS IN A NEW LIGHT

Gabriela Hearst, Chloé's new creative director, envisions fusing style, sustainability, and social responsibility. She wears a Chloé leather coat and boots. Hair, Odile Gilbert; makeup, Tom Pecheux. Fashion Editor: Camilla Nickerson.

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Photographed by Zoë Ghertner.

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Hearst communicates an urgency about the climate crisis—but she does so with elegance, joie de vivre, and something of a frontier spirit.



#### **SLEEP NO MORE**

Hearst created, with Bas Timmer of Sheltersuit Foundation, repurposed sleeping-bag parkas (which are not for sale) and backpacks (which are, with a portion of proceeds going to Sheltersuit). Model Adut Akech wears a Sheltersuit & Chloé coat. Chloé dress.



she says. Hearst tells me she had a dream in 2017 that she would design for Chloé, and later lobbied the house's CEO, Riccardo Bellini. ("He thought I was crazy," she says.) But her emphasis on sustainability and her track record of strong accessories were a good fit with Bellini's plan to refocus the brand with what he calls a "purpose-driven business model." Hearst leveled with her family: If she took the job, "the ones that are going to be screwed are you, because I have less time for you," she told them. If they had said no, she says, "I wouldn't have done it—that's the reality." They told her to go for it.

Hearst is tall, with high cheekbones, chin-length ash-blond hair, and pale eyes. On the day we meet, she's dressed in her first Chloé collection: a chunky, mustardy-green knit pullover, a long off-white pleated wool skirt, and cream-colored crepe wedge-heel boots. Large gold cutaway earrings frame her face, which has little makeup. For all the stage management of launching a new collection, Hearst is inescapably herself and bracingly open about the challenges she has faced.

She tells me she sees the Gabriela Hearst line as Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and war—a more cerebral femininity; clothes for women who are running companies—while Chloé is Aphrodite, the goddess of love, a more sensual power, younger. In pitching Bellini, she produced a 92-page booklet of images with a Venn diagram of where the two houses would overlap in concepts, including "Handcrafted," "Sustainability," "Wholehearted," and "Purpose-driven." But she also articulates clear stylistic differences. "You will never see a Gabriela Hearst woman in a pair of sweatpants in the airport," she tells me. You'll never see a scallop, a key element of Chloé's stylistic DNA, in Gabriela Hearst. Hemlines for Gabriela Hearst will never go above the knee; Chloé's will. It sounds like the mythical Chloé girl is growing up. "For me, it's about a Chloé woman," Hearst says, though she wants Chloé to keep its youthful spirit. She draws inspiration from her 13-year-old daughters and from friends in their 80s. "As women, sometimes we want to feel younger, sometimes we want to feel older," she says. "What we never want to feel is boring."

Now she aims to apply the sustainability approach of her own smaller house at the much larger Chloé. "Doing it successfully, for me, will mean having a luxury brand at a much higher scale in volume than Gabriela Hearst," she says. "It's a very ambitious target but something that wakes me up every morning to want to do this job."

For all Hearst's drive, though, the most important thing in her life isn't fashion but family and friends. Her commitment to sustainability comes from a place of righteous anger. She tells me about a 2017 trip she took to Turkana, in northern Kenya, with Save the Children, a charity that she and Austin support, where she saw malnourished children and women who had to walk for miles for water. "It was infuriating to think that—today—families have to choose between migration and famine," she says. "We

cannot allow that as a species," she continues, nor can she abide by it "as a businessperson, as a woman, as a mother."

The house has a long tradition of strong women designers, with the notable exception of Lagerfeld, who blazed a trail at Chloé with softly feminine dresses before leaving for Chanel in 1983, and Paulo Melim Andersson, who led the house briefly after Philo. Under McCartney, it became the go-to French house for the joyous flirtatiousness of the late '90s; Philo, who took over in 2001, virtually defined the boho-glam look of her era. More recently, creative directors Clare Waight Keller and Natacha Ramsay-Levi produced well-received collections. With Hearst, though, Chloé is telegraphing a new focus on values as much as on trends—or at least signaling that values are the latest trend. Today's Chloé woman has different priorities. Bringing on Hearst is "very courageous," says Olivier Gabet, the director of Paris's Musée des Arts Décoratifs. "She's less known to the public, but she has the guts and the vision to bring Chloé back to what made it strong in the '60s and '70s."

The house was founded in 1952 by another Gaby: Gaby Aghion, a vivacious entrepreneur from a Greek-Italian Jewish family who, with her husband, Raymond, left her native Alexandria, Egypt, after World War II. In Paris, Aghion and Raymond, a galleryist and anti-fascist activist, frequented Left Bank cafés and intellectual circles. (Their son, Philippe Aghion, is a world-class economist known for his theories of how creative destruction can lead to economic growth.) Aghion didn't need to work but saw a gap in the market between haute couture and

bespoke tailoring and began designing fresh cotton dresses that reminded her of home—the pink and beige of the Egyptian sand, which she said "feels like silk in your hands"—and selling them to boutiques with her own label. Thus was born high-end prêt-à-porter. Chloé was always "very feminine, very sensual, chic, very intelligent," Gabet says. And while Chloé was born in the heyday of French existentialism, he says, "now it's a question of environmentalism."

**B**orn Gabriela Perezutti Souza in 1976, Hearst is the fifth generation of her family raised in Uruguay. Her father's family emigrated from northern Italy, her mother's from Portugal via the Azores and Brazil. Her mother, Sonia, still lives in Uruguay, off the grid, on a solar-powered ranch. (Family snapshots of Hearst as a girl with her mom on horseback sometimes show up on the Gabriela Hearst Instagram.) Hearst is the eldest of four. For first grade, she was sent to Uruguay's capital, Montevideo, to live with her grandmother and attend the posh British School. "This was pre-globalization," Hearst says of her childhood. "We didn't have cable TV until I was 15." From early on, she knew she would leave. "It was very predictable, my future, if I didn't make changes," she tells me. "You would marry someone from a similar background, you would send your kids to the same school, you would become a member of the lawn tennis club."

"For me, it's about a Chloé woman," Hearst says.  
"And as a woman, sometimes we want to feel younger, sometimes we want to feel older.  
What we never want to feel is boring"



She wanted more. She spent a year of high school in Australia, came back to Uruguay to study communications, tried modeling in Paris and Milan, and then moved to New York to study acting at the Neighborhood Playhouse—the Meisner Technique. “It’s about performing from a place of honesty,” she says. While excellent training, it wasn’t for her. “I was not very good at taking direction,” she says. She worked as a waitress and in a retail showroom. In 2003, in Brooklyn, she started her first clothing line, Candela, silk-screening T-shirts—the first one depicted a winged woman riding a horse, inspired by her mother.

As the label started to take off, Austin Hearst became an investor. The two had met through mutual friends at a party in Buenos Aires in 2004. “I didn’t like him at first—he knows that,” she says, direct as always. But they stayed friends. In 2011, her father died. They had been very close. There were inheritance lawsuits, and when Gabriela ultimately prevailed and inherited his ranch, Austin sent her a giant bunch of white flowers with a note that said, “Nobody fucks with my baby.” The couple married in 2013—a City Hall wedding (she wore Valentino), then a big party at the Museum of Natural History (she wore Dior).

Austin Hearst is also a cofounder and investor in the Gabriela Hearst label. She had wanted to name it simply Perezutti, her surname, but a friend told her that no one would be able to

pronounce it, so she settled on Gabriela Hearst: her design, his investment. “It was never a ‘Let my wife have a hobby’ situation,” she tells me. “This is a business.” I ask her how she and Austin balance the marriage and the work, and she rolls her eyes. “Do *you* like to have budget meetings at 11 o’clock at night in your own bed?”

In 2019, LVMH became a minority investor in Gabriela Hearst. The brand is sold only at a few retailers and her own two shops, in New York and London. Hearst’s Nina bag, produced in small quantities and inspired by the sculptures of Botero (and named after Nina Simone), has long waiting lists. Oprah wore one to the wedding of Meghan Markle and Prince Harry; Markle herself wore one a few months later. Hearst is savvy and seems to have found the sweet spot where sustainability and exclusivity meet. “We had many opportunities for very rapid growth, and we declined those,” she says when I ask how she reconciles sustainability with producing four collections a year for two different houses. “My business could be triple

the size that it is, but we’ve decided to go slow because it didn’t make sense from a sustainable perspective.”

Chloé is trying the same approach and has committed to reduce its carbon emissions and water consumption by 25 percent by 2025 (its headquarters and its Paris boutiques already operate on 100 percent renewable energy). The house has also begun a collaboration with the Sheltersuit Foundation, a Dutch nonprofit that has made a parka with an attachable sleeping sack for the homeless and for refugee camps—a creative solution to a desperate problem. For Hearst’s first Chloé collection, Sheltersuit’s

founder, the Dutch designer Bas Timmer, designed a line of colorful backpacks using Chloé deadstock fabrics, with a percentage of the sales supporting the nonprofit, whose Dutch workshop is staffed by refugees. (The sleeping parkas themselves are not for sale.) “She calls it altruistic design,” Timmer tells me when we meet for a chat in the Place des Vosges. He’s wearing a rain jacket and a hoodie sweatshirt he’s fashioned from fabric in the Chloé warehouse. “With this collaboration, there’s a chance that we can disrupt a bit the fashion industry, even the nonprofit industry,” he says. “If Chloé takes this step, we can inspire more brands.”

While Hearst doesn’t have formal design training, she sketches copiously. She keeps a dream journal to gather ideas and operates largely on instinct. She also works closely with her best friend and muse, Stephanie

de Lavalette, a cofounder of the Gabriela Hearst brand who has joined her at Chloé. The two met in the early aughts and were roommates on Bank Street when de Lavalette, who is French, still worked in finance. “Gabriela likes to say that I’m the president of GSD—getting shit done,” de Lavalette tells me with a smile. She helps produce the fashion shows and the bags, oversees marketing and communications, and is an all-around sounding board. “My role has also changed as the company has grown,” she says. Hearst is the godmother to de Lavalette’s son, who is close with Hearst’s son. They’ve been there for each other through the births of children and deaths of parents. Talking to de Lavalette, I understand why another word in the Venn-diagram overlap between Hearst’s label and Chloé is “Friend-Tribe.”

De Lavalette and I are sitting over green tea in Hearst’s office at Chloé. There are family photos and art and poetry books on the shelves: Allen Ginsberg, Pablo Neruda, Hilma af Klint; a book on

CONTINUED ON PAGE 101



#### EARNING HER STRIPES

Akech exudes joyous sophistication in an electric knit frock. Chloé dress and mules.



#### EDGING FORWARD

Chloé's scalloped edges once signified girliness; with Hearst's debut, they now delineate grown-up, thoughtful glamour. Chloé leather dress and belt.





## FRINGE BENEFITS

Hearst looked homeward to her native Uruguay for Chloé's all-enveloping artisanal ponchos. Chloé puffer-poncho. All clothing and accessories at [chloe.com](http://chloe.com). In this story: makeup, Ana G de V. Produced by Alexis Piqueras at AP Studio Inc. Details, see In This Issue.

LOCAL PRODUCTION BY HABITANT.  
SET DESIGN, EMMA VIVIANA GONZALEZ.

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# ON THEIR GAMES

For American swimmer Simone Manuel, gymnast Sunisa Lee, and sprinter Noah Lyles, the Tokyo Olympics can't come soon enough. By Robert Sullivan.





**GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY**

"You go through these roller-coaster emotions," says Simone Manuel, a sprint freestyle swimmer who took two golds and two silvers at the Rio Olympics in 2016. Free People bralette. Commando bikini briefs. Hair and makeup, Kaori Nik. Fashion Editor: Tonne Goodman.



Photographed by Dana Scruggs

PRODUCED BY STEPHANIE O'CONNOR

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**D**on't forget: Even though they are poised to take place in 2021, the Olympics that we've all been waiting for are still the 2020 Olympics. From the perspectives of the athletes, it's as if they've been at the starting blocks all along, waiting to burst out, to dive or mount, throw or take one long last leap. From the point of view of everybody else, the notion of athletes returning feels like that next moment in a relay, when a baton from life before the pandemic gets passed on to a runner after, the teams joyfully picking up speed in a new world—and, somehow, speeding us along with them.

Sure, logistics are always changing, with health precautions like so many crucial hurdles, but the anticipation is building, with more competitions and the return of qualifying meets. "Me, personally, I am somebody who loves to be social," says Noah Lyles. America's 200-meter sprinting star has already won in New York and surged ahead late—his trademark—to win at the USATF Golden Games in California. "I love to go out and hang out—and practice—with other people. I love it! To train with others and get that excitement, that...edge!"

As was the case for everything else, the schedule for the 2020 Olympics did not go as planned. At the beginning of March 2020, Simone Manuel, who won two gold and two silver medals at the 2016 Rio Olympics and was planning on continuing her streak in Tokyo, had just finished up a swim meet in Des Moines while talking to her mom. Rumors about the virus were flying. "My mom

"I want to go out there and be somebody who's the first to do something," says Lyles, who was inspired as a kid by gymnast Gabby Douglas. "The Olympics hits everybody"

Photographed by Hype Williams

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## RUNNING START

For Noah Lyles, a 200-meter sprinting star, training within COVID protocols was tough. "I'm somebody who loves to be social," he says. Louis Vuitton Men's coat, shirt, tie, and pants. Grooming, Jennifer Beverly.

Fashion Editor:  
Alex Harrington.



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was saying, ‘Should you be taking pictures with fans? Should you be signing autographs?’ ” Manuel, 24, recalls. Three days after she got back to her home in California, the pool she trained in closed up, the 2020 games still theoretically on. “And nobody had a plan,” she says.

A gymnastics version of that happened to 18-year-old Sunisa Lee, who goes by Suni. A veteran of the U.S. team that won the gold at the 2019 world championships in Stuttgart, Germany, Lee was practicing her uneven-bar magic at her gym in the suburbs of St. Paul one day and doing Zoom workouts at home the next. Time stood still—until it didn’t. “It’s crazy how fast the time has gone,” she says.

One by one, athletes everywhere concocted new ways to train or resurrected old ones. In Florida, Lyles worked out on grass and on weekends took up roller-skating—a hobby that initially shocked his trainers, until they saw that it was less about speed and more about a vibe. “I figured out that a bunch of my friends, like, *love* to roller-skate. I actually got pretty decent.” Lee started running with her teammates, outdoors, and cooking with her mom, indoors. “It’s just so much healthier,” she says. (She reports, also, that it tasted great.) Thanks to her coach, Manuel managed to find a backyard pool seemingly designed for her needs: two lanes, with poolside race clocks and starting blocks. “You’re in California, and you have really big swim and water-polo fans, so everybody has these massive pools,” she says. Was she surprised at such a made-for-closed-swim-centers setup? “Yes,” she says, “but at the same time, if this were to be anywhere, it would be in California!”

The pool’s owners donated its daily use to Manuel and her former Stanford teammate Katie Ledecky, but the initial rush of fortunate feelings gave way to more complicated emotions in the shut-down world. “Sometimes I felt a little guilty,” Manuel recalls. “It was hard doing it knowing that the Olympics were postponed. You go through these roller-coaster emotions—you’re thinking, Ah, it’s another year to get better, and the next you’re like, But I was ready for it right now.”

She did her best to keep things in perspective, but like everyone, she missed the least extraordinary things, like a trip to the mall or to the nail salon—and if you follow her on Instagram, you already know that she is not fooling about her nails, a tiny detail that makes her photo finishes even more impressive. Fortunately, swimming is a kind of therapy for her, but Zooming with her mother and father in Texas did not replace hugging them. “I went on walks, and I’m not a walker!” Did she turn into one? She breaks into laughter. “No!”

Perspective reminds us that, for better or worse, perseverance is in the definition of an Olympic athlete, and for these games, perseverance is being tested, only more. Lyles and his brother, Josephus, who is also a professional sprinter, played just about every sport growing up, but it was during the USATF National Junior Olympic Championships, when Noah lost during the high-jump finals, that his mother, Keisha Caine Bishop—herself a standout runner—saw the 12-year-old transforming into a champion. “After he lost, he came over to me,” Bishop recalls, “and I said, ‘Hey, Noah—how’re you doing?’ He said, ‘I’m great.’ I said, ‘Are you disappointed that you didn’t win?’ He said, ‘Nope, I’m good—I’ll come back next year.’ ” It doesn’t hurt that Lyles has an Olympian’s physical mechanics (in stride frequency and length) or that he (like Lee and Manuel) is a student of his sport. “You hear this a lot,” says his coach, Lance Brauman, “but he is built to run.”

The first Olympics that amazed him were the 2012 London games, when he was 15 and mostly watched gymnastics. “I just thought Gabby Douglas was the coolest person because, one, she was young,” Lyles says. “Two, she was Black, and three, she was the *first* to do something.” (She was the first Black woman to win the Olympic all-around gymnastics title.) “I just thought, Yeah—I want to go out there and be somebody who’s the first to do something. The Olympics hits everybody.” He also wants to entertain, his race plan so closely mind-mapped that his way of keeping cool is putting on a show for the cameras—a Usain

Bolt-like tendency that Bolt himself has noticed, along with Lyles’s speed. (“He looks like he wants to do great things,” Bolt told *USA Today* this spring.) It’s a pre-race strategy that Lyles compares to that of a lion, which rests by day but comes out strong when it’s time to attack and amaze. Forgoing a mane, Lyles was recently spotted wearing a leopard-and-camo-print running suit—and, as always, entertaining socks. “I’m heavily into fashion,” he says, “and it’s funny, because in my high school years, all I wanted to do was run, so I very much didn’t care about how I looked. I basically dressed like a dad—a non-cool dad.”

As a young girl, Lee was always grabbing her mom’s phone to watch gymnasts flip, then repairing to the nearest couch or bed to try one out. Her father spotted her in those days and then, as her gymnastics improved, organized fundraisers at local Hmong restaurants to help pay for travel to national and then international meets, coaxing Lee to sing, which she loved. “My dad would pick some songs,” she remembers, “and I’d say, ‘What *is* this song?’ ” (Once it



LYLES: PHOTOGRAPHED BY HYPE WILLIAMS. LEE: PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSH OLINS. MANUEL: PHOTOGRAPHED BY DANA SCRUGGS.





**BY AIR, BY LAND, AND BY SEA**

RIGHT: Gymnast Sunisa Lee in a Dion Lee bodysuit. BELOW: Manuel in a Givenchy dress. ABOVE: Lyles in Adidas.



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## PASSING THE BAR

For Lee, Zoom workouts have given way to Tokyo travel plans. "It's crazy how fast the time has gone," she says. Alaïa dress. Hair and makeup, Peter Phung. Details, see In This Issue. Fashion Editor: Max Ortega.



PRODUCED BY TYLER COPELAND.

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“She really puts everything into it,”  
says Lee’s coach Jess Graba.  
“Not just the gymnastics but  
to be everything she can be”

was Bette Midler’s version of “Wind Beneath My Wings.”) The Twin Cities area is home to the largest urban Hmong community in the U.S., and when Lee wins, she is winning for the Hmong neighbors who supported her in the gym and supported her father: While helping a friend, he fell off a ladder, suffering a spinal-cord injury that paralyzed him from the chest down a few days before Lee won a gold, a silver, and a bronze medal at the national championships in 2019. Her father FaceTimed Lee at the nationals from his hospital bed to cheer her on, but no one knew what she was going through as she attempted a bar routine that she had upgraded in difficulty. As she aced the landing, the commentators predicted Tokyo gold.

The very sound of water would cause Simone Manuel fits of joy as a child—she laughs as she remembers fierce attempts to fling herself into the tub, anybody’s tub, whether undressed for it or not. “Whenever I heard the water running, I would just get *super* excited, kind of like when a dog is ready for a walk,” she jokes. Her older brothers were on the swim team, and after watching them she announced to her parents she could swim. She wasn’t kidding. “Why is Simone not doing what the others are doing?” her mother asked the instructor when she spotted her daughter swimming across the pool on day two of lessons. “Why isn’t she...floating?” The response: “Some kids are just ready to swim.” Her brothers can still beat her—but not because they’re faster. “Their technique is so terrible, and then I’m laughing and choking

on water so much that they win,” Manuel says, “but it’s okay.”

After she finished Stanford, where she studied communications and African and African American studies, 2020 was to be Manuel’s year to concentrate on the Olympics, with summertime the final lap of four years of prep. The summer, of course, marked the beginning of historic mass uprisings, and as the first Black woman to win an individual medal in Olympic swimming, she was acutely aware of the swimming pool as a historic site of racial contest in modern American history: The pool was like the lunch counter at the start of the Civil Rights movement, when, for instance, acid was poured in a pool in the vicinity of Black bathers. Later, as suburbs expanded and cities continued to segregate, the ability to swim marked both access and privilege, as it does today. (The percentage of Black members in USA Swimming is, by their own accounting, somewhere in the single digits.) Immediately following her wins at Rio, Manuel was on MSNBC encouraging Black children in the U.S. with little or no swimming ability—69 percent—to learn. (“You *can* do it,” she said, still standing poolside.) Later she noted that, according to the CDC’s last study, in 2014, Black children are 5.5 times more likely to drown in swimming pools. Television announcers throughout her ascent in the sport tended to describe Manuel as “coming out of nowhere,” when she *was* there—usually, after the finish, on a podium—all along. In her own telling, it’s a bias she has

felt viscerally—and while once she might have talked less about her own experiences, she’s now ready to share more, for her own sake and the sake of others. “When you are telling other people what you’re feeling,” she says, “you never know who you affect—you could be helping them through the same storm.”

When I talked with the athletes as the summer was about to begin, Manuel had been to a meet and remembered all the things you forget—hotels, logistics—and had just returned from a three-week rest. She’d gone back to Sugar Land, Texas, her hometown, to binge-watch *Good Girls* (“They’re *not* good girls!”) and savor Shipley’s glazed doughnuts (“a pillow of goodness”). Lyles had just begun to run 200s again too, and watching him come out of the first turn was like watching someone turn on a jet pack, an explosive speed he describes like a physicist: “When you come out to the straightaway, if you stay in the middle or come even closer to the inside of the lane, you will actually take all that speed that you built up, and it will force you out.”

Suni Lee had just aced the bars at a meet in Indianapolis, a 10-hour drive with her teammates to an event that was spectator-less but televised—a strange and pressure-making combination—and her coach was raving. “She really puts everything into it—not just the gymnastics but to be everything she can be,” says Jess Graba. She came with a new bar routine and, as per her custom, spoke to nobody beforehand but at last, when she landed, broke open a huge, winning smile. After all, she had left the earth, launching into her Nabieva—the technical term for when, to the layperson, she is soaring like a bird. “I am literally flying over the bar and catching it,” Lee says. “It feels so cool.” □

Photographed by Josh Olins



Omar Sy's sensational, stylish turn in the Netflix series *Lupin* has made him more than the leading man of our moment. Alexandra Marshall reports on a French star at the forefront of a new wave. Photographed by Jonas Unger.

# Scene Stealer

“My sense of adventure comes from the place I grew up,” says Omar Sy, the star of *Lupin*—the Netflix series that has become an international phenomenon—and easily the most beloved actor in France. (Three times Sy has been voted France’s favorite person, on an open ballot.) The place he’s talking about is Trappes, one of the infamous *banlieues* about 20 miles west of Paris, which, collectively, occupy a complicated place in the French national imagination. *Banlieues* are suburbs outside major cities filled with housing projects that were cheaply constructed for immigrant workers during France’s postwar labor shortage. As jobs dried up in the 1980s and ’90s, austerity settled in and xenophobia flared, giving the *banlieues* a forbidding reputation, either to be pitied or shunned. “In Europe, city centers are for the rich,” explains Sy, the third of seven children born to a Senegalese father and Mauritanian mother. “The more outside you live, the more outside the bubble you are, and it’s hard to come in.”

But Sy was happy in Trappes, where soccer pitches opened onto pastures and forests, and his friends had immediate family from everywhere. “Mediterraneans, West Africans, Greek, Polish, Romanians,” Sy says. “I heard so many languages and tasted so much food! I’d go up to the fifth floor and be in Greece, downstairs in the Maghreb. It pushed me to have an open spirit.” It was a friend from the neighborhood, Jamel Debbouze, a comedian with a lunchtime show on the national station Radio Nova, who gave Sy his big break, inviting him on to impersonate a retired football star. (“I’d have loved to be a player,” says Sy, who was 19 at the time, “but I wasn’t any good.”) At the station he met the comedian Fred Testot, and soon the two became Omar et Fred, an improv and sketch-comedy duo who starred in a series of shorts on the national network Canal+. Minor comedic turns gave way, bit by bit, to meatier roles—anything the young actor, with his sparkling charisma and impeccable timing, could get.

France has no legal recognition of ethnicity, and cultural difference has historically been difficult to affirm, much less celebrate, without being seen as a threat to an idealized, implicitly white notion of universal Frenchness. But as Sy’s

generation came into its own, a different view began to take hold. Sy is 43; his cohort includes stars like Debbouze, who went on to have a huge career in comedy, and the stand-up comedian Gad Elmaleh; actors like Aïssa Maïga and Tahar Rahim; and filmmakers like Roschdy Zem. As they gain success and creative recognition, the drab, grim, piously well-meaning *banlieue* dramas of French cinema have given way to shows like *Lupin*, which are aspirational, gorgeous, upbeat, and not at all preachy. “Thank God people of this generation now have the means to express ourselves in fashion, literature, and art,” Sy says. “We speak of ourselves, and we’re stylish and sexy.”

*Lupin* is certainly stylish and sexy—a breathlessly paced caper series loosely based on Maurice Leblanc’s belle époque literary character Arsène Lupin. “Lupin is one of those characters who’s been done so many times, he’s really part of the French firmament,” says Sy, a creative producer alongside showrunner and writer George Kay. (“Netflix wanted Omar Sy attached to that IP,” says Kay.) It was Sy’s idea to use Lupin as the inspiration for a modern character, Assane Diop, the son of a Senegalese immigrant whose father passed on his love of Leblanc’s novels. Diop’s race, and the social invisibility it sometimes provides, adds another layer of subtlety to the idea of the master thief. Diop, who can disappear in many ways, uses it to his advantage as he avenges his father’s death.

“I wanted Assane to win all the time and have great victories and stick two fingers up at the establishment,” says Kay. “Omar was down for that completely, but he was also encouraging of his failures. Why not have a character who could win without breaking a sweat but can’t work out what to buy for his kid’s birthday? Those conversations were cool to have with Omar.”

Sy wouldn’t have had the clout to develop a splashy TV series were it not for *The* CONTINUED ON PAGE 102

## ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Sy, photographed in Paris, is easily the most beloved actor in France—even before his breakout role as Assane Diop in *Lupin*. Dior Men coat. Dolce & Gabbana sweater and cap. Boss pants. Hair, JAYR; makeup, Angloma. Fashion Editor: Michael Philouze. Details, see In This Issue.





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The New Bags  
(and boots and  
belts and baubles)  
are graphic,  
oversized,  
textured, plucky,  
and, perhaps  
strangest of all:  
perfectly useful.

Photographed by Théo de Gueltzl.

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#### JUST FOR KICKS

Everybody talks about form meeting function—what about function meeting fun? Model Anok Yai wears gold-toed **Schiaparelli** boots ([schiaparelli.com](http://schiaparelli.com)) with a wild-style **Louis Vuitton x Fornasetti** dress ([louisvuitton.com](http://louisvuitton.com)).

Fashion Editor:  
Alex Harrington.



## UPPER HAND

Yai plays an utterly enchanting game of catch in **Prada** gloves (replete with pockets!) and a knit-trimmed jumpsuit; both at [prada.com](http://prada.com).







#### EARTHLY DELIGHTS

Yai keeps things in perspective with an almost planetary shoulder bag and a perfectly coordinated **Conner Ives** jacket and skirt; all at connerives.com.

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#### SUPERSIZE ME

There's a golden haze on the meadow—and a huge crimson bag smack-dab in the spotlight. Marni bag; [marni.com](http://marni.com). Bottega Veneta dress; [bottegabeneta.com](http://bottegabeneta.com).

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**WORKS LIKE  
A CHARM**

A magic mushroom,  
but make it fashion.  
Yai wears a **Marni**  
necklace and knit  
bodysuit (\$1,490);  
marni.com.





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#### HEAD CASE

Classics go fantastic when an arresting clutch by **Louis Vuitton x Fornasetti** (louisvuitton.com) meets a **Kenzo** oversized sweater (kenzo.com)—all bold lines and blown-out proportions.

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#### SOFT FOCUS

An S.R. STUDIO. LA. CA. bag (srstudio.com) that, joyously, resembles something out of a childhood toy box is the perfect vessel for flowers—and a worthy companion for this shapely Alexander McQueen knit dress (alexandermcqueen.com).

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#### VINE AND DANDY

Yai heads up an ivy league all her own with **Valentino** boots (\$980; [valentino.com](http://valentino.com)) below a voluminous **JW Anderson** dress ([jwanderson.com](http://jwanderson.com)).

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#### ABOUT FACE

Don't be fooled by its homespun, seemingly hodgepodge coziness; this two-toned balaclava is pure, immaculate, joyful **Miu Miu** (\$510), as are the twisted, crocheted face masks worn as a bandeau top (\$725 each). All at [miumiu.com](http://miumiu.com).





### READY TO ROLL

Yai is heaven on wheels in a **Bottega Veneta** belt (\$2,500) and roller skates (\$2,100; both at [bottegabeneta.com](http://bottegabeneta.com)) over and under a **Dolce & Gabbana** dress (\$1,895; [dolcegabbana.com](http://dolcegabbana.com)). In this story: hair, Christian Eberhard; makeup, Cécile Paravina. Details, see In This Issue.



PRODUCED BY KITTEN PRODUCTION. SET DESIGN, IBBY NUOYA.

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#### GOOD SPORT

Bieber's **Alexander McQueen** jacket (alexandermcqueen.com) features surprisingly roomy sleeves—all the better to move in it.

**Alo** biker shorts (\$56; aloyoga.com).

**Jennifer Fisher** earrings.

Fashion Editor:  
Camilla Nickerson.

# Outer Limits

This fall, jackets have been reimagined: Bombers come in tweed, capes are quilted in nylon—and Hailey Bieber models them all. Photographed by Stefan Ruiz.





**THE MORE THE  
MERRIER**

Bieber's multilayered  
look is as polished  
as it is easy to wear.

**Louis Vuitton**  
jacket, embroidered  
dress, T-shirt dress,  
and balloon skirt;  
louisvuitton.com.



# MAKE IT WORK

By Chioma Nnadi



I am still somewhat haunted by the memory of my first “statement” jacket: the school blazer I wore as a child growing up in ’90s London. “You look like a little gray mouse,” said my mother, reaching to pinch my cheeks as I emerged, ready for my first day of seventh grade, dressed in a knife-pleated gray skirt and matching V-neck sweater. I shrugged on the imposing gray jacket over my scrawny shoulders as if it were a giant cinder block—Mum had insisted on buying it with “room left to grow.” The expression on my face did, in fact, read like a small frightened animal’s. Having to wear a school uniform was bad enough, but somehow the awkward, too-big proportions set off a spiral of anxious thoughts.

What I didn’t understand as a kid, I now fully appreciate as an adult: Those slightly off-kilter proportions are often what makes a good piece truly great. I am reminded of this as I slip on a hot-pink Jacquemus jacket in the fitting room at Dover Street Market on a Saturday afternoon in Manhattan in late May. The feeling is both foreign and strangely familiar, the look itself so right for now: extra-wide in the shoulder, square through the body, and so long in the sleeve I can barely see my fingertips in the mirror. After months of working from home swaddled in droopy sweats, the prospect of dressing for a real-life office gives me back-to-school butterflies—in a good way.

It wasn’t until I moved to New York in the early aughts that I truly began to embrace the transformative power of a great

jacket. I was working at an indie magazine downtown when I scored my first really grown-up version—an oversized navy Helmut Lang with frayed edges—at a sample sale the visionary designer held before closing his SoHo studio in 2005. When *Vogue* called me a few years later on a Friday afternoon asking if I could come in at short notice for a second interview, I was relieved to find that jacket hanging over the back of my chair. It didn’t matter that I was wearing jeans: With this thrown over my shoulders, I was ready for anything.

Watching the new collections this past February, I saw that big-jacket energy explode all over again. A few in particular, worn here by Hailey Bieber, seem primed for where we find ourselves now. And with their off-kilter scale and streetwise swagger, maybe they’re just the thing to bridge that ever-narrowing gap between work life and *life* life. Personally, I’d experiment by layering them up two by two, perhaps over Prada’s new second-skin printed bodysuits. Whatever it is, it won’t be uniform. □

## FLYING COLLARS

The popped plaid on Bieber’s quilted Burberry jacket (\$990; burberry.com) is nothing less than a tartan calling card.



## HINT OF GLINT

Graphic printed knits serve as a base layer for a satiny bomber and tweedy blazer. **Stella McCartney** jacket (\$1,750) and blazer (\$1,895); stellamccartney.com. **Prada** long johns; prada.com. **Jennifer Fisher** earrings.



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#### PUFF PIECE

The hue of this quilted jacket ranges from energizing to attention-grabbing, depending on your perspective. **Eckhaus Latta** jacket, \$575; eckhauslatta.com.

**Max Mara** blazer \$1,690; maxmara.com. **Fendi** skirt, \$1,850; fendi.com.



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## MAKE ROOM

With voluminous tangerine-colored satin sleeves and single-breasted body, this jacket makes a statement all by itself. Why complicate things by adding anything else? **Junya Watanabe** jacket, \$2,355; doverstreetmarket.com. In this story: hair, Jimmy Paul; makeup, Fara Homidi. Details, see In This Issue.



PRODUCED BY PREISS CREATIVE.

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We're sliding back  
into the swim of  
going out—and getting  
spruced up for it.  
So put on your spikiest  
heels and most  
feathery frocks—it's  
high time for fashion  
that pulls no punches.  
Photographed by  
Oliver Hadlee Pearch.

●  
give me

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#### SHAPE SHIFTER

Long and lithe or graphic and voluminous? Model Mona Tougaard does on-the-town dressing in two dramatically different—but similarly striking—ways. Loewe dress and shoulder bag; loewe.com. Andy Wolf Eyewear sunglasses.

Pomellato earring. Charlotte Chesnais ring. OPPOSITE: Marni bodysuit (\$1,590), skirt (\$1,690), and boots; marni.com.

Fashion Editor:  
Carlos Nazario.

# the night

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# RIISING TO THE OCCASION

By Chloe Malle

After a year when evening dress was replaced by the nap dress, aren't we all desperate to be glamorous again? During the five years that I covered events for *Vogue* from my post on the editorial staff, I dressed up in black tie three times a week. Sometimes I had time to go home or get my hair blown out, but often I simply dragged my borrowed sequins or satin to the office in a garment bag—along with a tote stuffed with Manolo BB pumps, a pair of earrings, and my makeup bag—and under the harsh lighting of the Condé Nast bathroom scraped my hair back into a tight bun, slicked it with pomade to tame the flyaways, and swiped on an additional coat of mascara. Like most routines, it became second nature and, sometimes, tedious. Now, though, years later and after months curled on the couch in nothing more coordinated than the two pieces of an Entireworld sweatsuit, I pine for those days—even the fluorescent bathroom lighting.

For all those many galas and fêtes, I tended to wear borrowed sample dresses that, while up to the dress

code, were straightforward in cut, color, and texture—like a sensible haircut. Once a year, though, on the first Monday in May, I was emboldened by the sartorial majesty of the occasion to wear something more extravagant to the Met gala, and it likely comes as no surprise that the most eccentric, over-the-top dresses often resulted in the liveliest memories and the best evenings. The paillette-and-shell-embellished Rodarte transformed me into a magical mermaid, even though in reality I looked more like a shipwrecked dragon; the jet-plumed Ferretti frock not only erased any nervous feelings of being an ugly duckling—it made me feel like an extra in *Black Swan*. And in a year spent observing practically the same bedtime as my one-year-old, these high-wattage looks were the ones I found myself reminiscing about.

Sitting in front of our computers in oversized knits to watch the Zoom shows of the fall 2021 collections felt like a taunting reminder of what we did not have access to: Paco Rabanne's gilded girls in jewel-encrusted chain mail; Louis Vuitton's sequined sirens stalking through the Louvre to the tune of Daft Punk's "Around the World" (when the only place I was going was around the block to the bodega for more Reese's). Carbonated with the newly liberated frisson, everything on the fall runways seemed to be fringed, feathered, or bejeweled. The collective message appeared to be "Go big or stay home"—and considering how sick we are of the latter, it's time to embrace the former with the same vigor we embraced sourdough starters.

Dressing up again is emotional because it signifies coming together again. And while the new clothes may be fantastical, designers such as Jonathan Anderson saw them as being more about "projecting what a new reality will hopefully be," as he said at the time of his show in March. "Believe it, and it will happen." The collections celebrated hand-wrought romance and, yes, tactility—the ability to finger the pearly shell shards on a friend's Bottega dress IRL.

Over the past several years, a raft of essays and manifestos have emerged centered on reclaiming the power of dressing solely for oneself.

I've read them; I understand the sentiment. I beg to differ: I do not dress up for myself—I dress for other people, and a year spent at home with no dinner dates, parties, or weddings to dress for has only confirmed that. Like all of us, I have missed seeing people during this long year, but I have also missed them seeing me.

The problem is that I no longer know how to get dressed. In late spring I had plans to meet two friends for drinks at the Odeon in Tribeca. I was half-vaccinated and hadn't been out of the apartment all week except to walk my dog, Lloyd. Opening my closet, I felt like I was greeting old friends: some the easy confidantes you can add to any dinner party; others who require a bit more effort but whose eccentricity or wicked sense of humor makes the work worthwhile; and those you keep in your life because they were with you at your college graduation or helped you through your first day of a big job. I was happy to finally be reunited with all of them, but the paralysis I experienced was similar to the anxiety I have felt when returning to social settings.

While I once knew that my Marc Jacobs tweed blazer works with my navy Belgian loafers, which can be swapped out for suede pumps for dinner, now everything was a blank slate. I was surprised to find myself gravitating toward pieces I loved, rather than tried-and-true closet workhorses. I reached for my father's monogrammed Charvet shirt, layered under the bugle-beaded Michael Kors cardigan that long ago migrated from my mother's closet to mine. I added metallic Tabitha Simmons Mary Janes and a passementerie-appliqued Alix of Bohemia bolero. When I finally checked myself in the mirror in my building's lobby, it was too late—I made Helena Bonham Carter look like Phoebe Philo. The muscle memory was gone. CONTINUED ON PAGE 103

## LET'S GET TOGETHER

FROM NEAR RIGHT: Model Malick Bodian wears Dries Van Noten. Model Chili Dia wears a Louis Vuitton dress (louisvuitton.com). Tougaard wears a Givenchy dress (givenchy.com). Model Ifrah Qaasim wears a Louis Vuitton dress and boots (louisvuitton.com). Musical artist Luv Resval wears Celine Homme by Hedi Slimane.





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#### FULL FEATHER

Tougaard is extraordinarily, exuberantly in plume in a Bottega Veneta dress and earrings; bottegaveneta.com.

#### BEAUTY NOTE

Stand out from the flock with a contoured pout. Hourglass Panoramic Long Wear Lip Liner in Eden's creamy, water-resistant formula provides a rich color payoff that doesn't smudge.





### SITTING PRETTY

Tougaard and Dia offer two glinting, winking examples of the kind of all-out glamour we've been missing. Dia wears a **Chopard** earring and **Brother Vellies** sandals. Tougaard wears a **Milamore** earring and **Del Core** sandal.







#### PARTY PEOPLE

Bright colors, bolder jewels. TOP LEFT: Dia wears a **Bottega Veneta** dress; [bottegabeneta.com](http://bottegabeneta.com). **Swarovski** necklace. Bodian wears a **Lanvin** jacket, shirt, and pants. ABOVE: Tougaard wears layered tops and a bracelet, all by **Paco Rabanne**; [pacorabanne.com](http://pacorabanne.com). LEFT: **Del Core** jacket, pants, and sandals; [delcore.com](http://delcore.com).

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#### FLASH MOB

The more shimmer, the better—no matter where it is you end up. FROM FAR LEFT: Tougaard wears an **Ambush** dress; ambushdesign.com. **Milamore** earring. Qaasim wears a **Loewe** dress; loewe.com. **Agmes** earring. Dia wears a **Paco Rabanne** dress; pacorabanne.com. **Chopard** earring. In this story: hair, Yann Turchi; makeup, Hiromi Ueda. Details, see In This Issue.





# Index



13



14



12



11



## Causes for Celebration

From ethically produced jewelry to artisanally crafted separates and accessories supporting organizations like World Central Kitchen and Space for Giants: Here's where good style meets good works.

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی





1. DIARRABLU PANTS, \$135; DIARRABLU.COM.
2. ULLA JOHNSON DRESS, \$765; ULLAJOHNSON.COM.
3. JACQUIE AICHE x FASHION TRUST ARABIA NECKLACE, \$675; JACQUIEAICHE.COM.
4. STUDIO 189 SKIRT, \$275; STUDIOONEEIGHTYNINE.COM.
5. ALEJANDRA ALONSO ROJAS SWEATER, \$835; ALEJANDRAALONSOROJAS.COM.
6. PRONUNIS RING; PRONUNISJEWELRY.COM.
7. LOEWE BAG; LOEWE.COM.
8. COLVILLE THROW, \$1,055; MATCHESFASHION.COM.
9. STELLA JEAN FOR FAO COAT, \$1,132; SAKSFIFTHAVENUE.COM.
10. VICTOR GLEMAUD CLOG, \$345; THEREALREAL.COM.
11. HARWELL GODFREY PENDANT; HARWELLGODFREY.COM.
12. ALTUZARRA TOTE BAG, \$1,195; ALTUZARRA.COM.
13. BROTHERVELLIES SANDAL, \$495; BROTHERVELLIES.COM.
14. POMELLATO EARRINGS; POMELLATO.COM.

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## THE DOCTOR IS IN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 53

including a group of Navy ROTC, flags erect. The guys in the press vans leap out and race toward the front of the motorcade, and by the time I get there, the Bidens are just stepping out of the armored Cadillac known as the Beast. I watch, with some trepidation, as President Biden walks off down the road and into the grass. He crouches into a deep knee bend, impressive for a 78-year-old, as a little boy carrying a tiny American flag comes toward him. He embraces the child as Jill lingers on the macadam behind him in black-and-white stilettos, looking every inch a goddess at 69. It's moments like this with the Bidens—hugging children!—that bring home just how incomprehensibly irregular and out of place our previous president and first lady really were.

I had talked to Joe Biden on the phone a few times—once at their beach house in Delaware, the grandkids swirling around, eating cheesesteak hoagies, when someone handed me a cell phone: *Joe wants to talk to you*—but I had never met him in person. On the flight back to D.C., I am fetched from the back of AF1, brought to somewhere in the middle of the plane, and deposited in a conference room in the sky: all burlwood, plush carpeting, and dim table lamps. When the president and first lady appear, I tell him that I think I've met every person in his family over the past 13 years. "God, it doesn't seem that long," he says.

"You have," says Jill. "You met Mom-Mom and Val," Biden's mother and sister, "all the kids."

I ask if he'd given any thought in all these years to what kind of first lady Jill would be. "We never talked about this, so I'm probably going to get you in trouble," the president says to Jill—before insisting that he never wanted to live in the White House. It was part of his reluctance to run for the office in the first place. "It was 'Hail to the Chief' and all that stuff when I was a young senator. But I never had a desire for that piece of it." He adds that he thinks the Obamas kind of had a similar view. "There was no real upside to living physically in the White House. It's the greatest honor in the world...but there's no privacy. And the pomp-and-circumstance part is not something we've ever gone out of our way to look for." But Trump vanquished his reluctance. "I think the same thing was sinking in with you," he says to Jill. "About the state of the country." He turns to me. "Jill said, 'You gotta run. Because there's so much at stake.' So this was the first time I ran...without thinking about any of the accoutrements of, you know, *I could have Air Force One* or

*I could have*. . . I think part of that got knocked out by being vice president. And I realized that I probably—whether I'm right or not—*knew* more about the issues than most people because I've been around so long."

Jill was hesitant to take on the "role of the wife of the United States senator," he says—even as she would campaign by his side in those Senate years. "But it was clear to me that she knew exactly what *she* would do if she were first lady. And so she came in, I think—knowing the experience of being vice president, knowing the power of the presidency—knowing that she could change things." He remembers the first time she spoke in front of a truly big crowd, "and I was like, *That's my girl*. So proud. She would just go do it, and she got better and better. And she started saying, 'Joe, you gotta put a little more emotion into what you're doing.'"

I ask if becoming president and first lady affected their marriage. "Yeah, it has," he says, and an almost pained expression crosses his face. "I miss her. I'm really proud of her. But it's not like we can just go off like we used to. When we were living in Delaware and married, once a month we'd just go up to a local bed-and-breakfast by ourselves, to make sure we had a romantic time to just get away and hang out with each other."

You might need to schedule that in, I joke.

"But all kidding aside, that's part of the problem. You *can't*. I'm not complaining. It's part of the deal. But this life prevents it." He looks at Jill. "It's just harder. Don't you think that's right?"

"Oh, *yeah*," she says.

"And the other thing is, she's been traveling all over the country," says Biden. "And doing *major* events for me...and for the country. And so I'll find that I'm working on a hell of an important speech and I'm distracted. And then I may not be working on one and I want to go and hang out with her, and she's working on an important speech! Or grading papers. We have to figure out a way—and I mean this sincerely—to be able to steal time for one another. I think that's the deal."

The next day, I'm sitting in the Jackie Kennedy garden with Jill. Like its counterpart, the Rose Garden, which is on the other side of the South Portico, just outside the West Wing, this one was redesigned in the '60s by Bunny Mellon. It has been tinkered with over the years, but it remains fundamentally the same: ridiculously beautiful. And because it is early May, there are enormous, perfect blooms everywhere you turn, the smell

intoxicating. The Bidens are gardeners. Joe once planted a rose garden for Jill at their house in Wilmington for her birthday, and Jill has put in a "little cutting garden" here at the White House "so that if I go to visit somebody, I can make them a bouquet."

"The flowers here...I mean...I'm out here every morning at six with the dogs," she says. Do they run around? "Yeah. I throw the ball. They get water." She insists we take a stroll over to look at the roses. "They just popped this week." Everyone got so bent out of shape over Melania redoing the Rose Garden, but I think she made it better, I say. "Apparently she put in these walkways. Are these, like, some of the most beautiful roses you've ever *seen*?" Suddenly a few Secret Service guys and her senior adviser, Anthony Bernal, come pouring out of the West Wing. "Somebody was like, 'Stop! The first lady's out there,'" says Bernal, laughing. "I'm like, 'What is the first lady doing...?'" It is a reminder of what a tight ship they're running, especially today, with three different camera crews setting up around the White House and the president preparing to give a televised speech in the East Room.

Back under the trellis, I ask Dr. Biden how she's adjusting to life in the White House. "You know, it has this sort of magical quality to it. One room is just more beautiful than the next, and you're sort of in awe. Everyone here works so hard to create this world because I think that they understand the kind of pressure that Joe and I are under. They make the rooms beautiful, and the flowers and the food are perfect. And you have the balconies. And, of course, our grandkids had been here a lot with the Obama kids. So they knew it but not as intimately, of course, as us living here ourselves." Suddenly you can hear Champ and Major, the Bidens' German shepherds, barking in the distance. Jill's ears perk up.... "Listen," she says, smiling, "the dogs."

In most couples with pets, there's usually one person who pays them a little more mind, senses their needs—even expresses feelings through them. (*Timmy is bored*, I will say when I'm the one who's bored.) It's a pretty good bet that person is Jill. Unbidden, she says, "...and then there was all the dog drama." She lets out a mordant chuckle (both dogs temporarily left the White House after a pair of nipping incidents by the boisterous Major). "I knew it was going to be hard for the dogs. I mean, Champ's going on 14, you know? And to move him in and have him get used to it? And then Major....I mean, let's face it. He hadn't been around so many people in forever. But now, at every turn, somebody's



stepping out or somebody's coming around a corner. So I guess I felt...I really tried hard to make everybody comfortable. Make it feel like home. We brought family pictures down and put them all around. And so, you know, we've adjusted." (Champ died peacefully of old age as this issue went to press.)

I ask her what she thought about what Joe said on the plane last night. "Well, it's true because we're both so busy. And so we have to, I think, try a little harder to make time for one another. Even the thing about having dinner together: Sometimes we eat on the balcony; last night we ate in the yellow Oval, upstairs. It's just part of the day that we set apart, and we still light the candles, still have the conversations, still put the phones away."

The Bidens clearly intend to spend time at the beach in Delaware—the White House got clearance to land Marine One in the parking lot at Gordons Pond in Cape Henlopen State Park, which is just minutes away from their summer house. But Dr. Biden worries whether Joe will be able to make the time, and there's the hassle of how cumbersome everything gets with staff and security. "I'm going in about a week. Joe hasn't yet. I think it's going to be a lot harder for him. I don't know. It's just harder. I don't know how he could actually go on the beach."

They are, however, escaping to their home in suburban Wilmington, to the house that Joe famously designed himself. It is in a beautiful part of that infamously dreary city, situated on a lake, with a big swimming pool. Talking about it, I'm reminded all over again that the Bidens are really not creatures of Washington, despite their more than 40 years of service. "We have the best of both worlds," says Dr. Biden. "We have our home in Delaware; we have grandkids in Delaware. Finnegan and Maisy are at Penn. They say, 'Nana, we hear you're coming home; can we come down and have lunch?' Then they clean out the refrigerator; they take bags full of food home. And then, in D.C., we have grandkids here—Naomi's here. She just got her first job as a lawyer. So she comes over, and she'll do movie night with us, or she'll play tennis with her boyfriend. We have friends in both places. I guess our home base has sort of stretched from Delaware to Washington. It's just bigger now."

We have moved into the White House for the end of our interview, to the Vermeil Room, on the ground floor. It is painted a rich yellow with green drapes, and there is a fair showing of modern art that I recognize as acquisitions from the Obama years. It also houses a collection of silver-gilt tableware gifted to the White House in 1958 by Margaret

Thompson Biddle. Jill Biden hasn't had much time to think about how she intends to entertain once things open up a bit more, but says this: "I want the White House to feel comfortable. It's like my beach house, where you feel like you can just come in, and your bathing suit is sandy, but it's okay to sit down on the chair. I want people to feel that way, that they're comfortable, that it's their house. Not like, 'Oh, I can't touch this.'"

"There's just thousands and thousands of people who have pictures of themselves with Jill and Joe Biden," says the *Washington Post's* Mary Jordan, who has attended numerous Biden events at the vice president's mansion. "Because they're always together, and they throw parties, and they allowed people to take pictures. A lot of people don't do that. Jill and Joe were always there, and it's clear they like people. And Jill doesn't act her age, either, which is great." As an example, she tells me a story about the day the Bidens hosted a picnic on the lawn at the U.S. Naval Observatory. "It was a really hot summer day, and all of a sudden, Jill came out with a squirt gun and started squirting Joe. It was just this spontaneous, funny thing. I think they just get a kick out of life. That kind of thing is hard to fake."

Jill Biden's relationship to fashion seems to have been complicated by the pandemic. She is a very stylish person who even in jeans and a cashmere sweater over an untucked chambray looks totally pulled together. But for now, at least, she does not want to talk too much about it. It's that reading-the-room thing: When you ask Dr. Biden a question that she does not want to answer, she flashes a winning smile that says very clearly, "Let's move on." Even Elizabeth Alexander, her communications director, looks uncomfortable when I bring it up. Dr. Biden doesn't work with a stylist: "It's all her," Alexander says. Fine, then I'll say it: She's wearing a lot of Brandon Maxwell. She is also wearing a lot of young, emerging, and diverse designers. "I think that's important: You try to lift up other people," Dr. Biden says. "I like to choose from a diverse group of designers. When I was planning my Inauguration outfits, that's one of the things I considered."

When I point out the Instagram account that someone started last summer, drjillbidenfashion, she looks surprised. "No, I haven't seen it." Someone is dutifully posting everything that you wear, I say. "Oh, great," she says with a comic roll of the eyes. And then this: "It's kind of surprising, I think, how much commentary is made about what I wear or if I put my hair in a scrunchie. I put my hair up! Or the stocking thing...."

Fishnetgate? "It's amazing how much people pay attention to every little detail." Then she adds, just for the record: "And they weren't fishnets. They weren't lace. They were *very pretty stockings*." □

## THIS WOMAN'S WORK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

sacred geometry—the notion there's metaphysical meaning in shapes and patterns found in nature, which Hearst tells me she's been reading about lately. (During the pandemic, like so many of us, she spent a lot of time with Netflix; her favorites are a docuseries on rock and roll in Latin America and David Attenborough's documentary *A Life on Our Planet*.) On one wall of the office is a collage about climate change by the Brooklyn-based artist Dustin Yellin, a good friend. The two met at a Beastie Boys storytelling performance in Brooklyn—both are fans—and bonded over their shared urgency about the environment. She and Austin are supporters of Yellin's Pioneer Works art space in Brooklyn. Asked to describe Hearst, Yellin responds, "Mystical and kind and generous. Fiery. Unrelenting—is that an adjective?"

I understand what he means a few weeks later, when, walking with Hearst on a crisp spring morning, I ask if she remembers her first trip to Paris. I'm not expecting what comes next. She tells me she had gone there to model for the Next Agency. "From age 18 to 21, I was battling eating disorders," she says, stopping on the sidewalk to look me directly in the eye. "I was bulimic in a very, very deep way. I would spend days just throwing up. It was an addiction like any other addiction." Her parents were extremely worried and thought modeling in Paris was a terrible idea. "But I had a passport, and I had saved \$5,000, and I'm like, 'I'm going.'" she says. "There was a therapist, I don't remember his name, who said to my parents in front of me, 'She goes to Paris, she dies.' I was like, 'Okay. I'll die in Paris.'"

It was an awful time and one Hearst hasn't talked about publicly before. "When I look back, it's like all the bad ideas put together," she says. She got help and today urges anyone battling eating disorders and mental-health issues to do the same: Confronting her anorexia and bulimia changed her life. "When you deal with any addiction—and no matter at what age—and you come out alive on the other side, you know there is hope. But you have to face your own demons; you have to face the parts of yourself that you need to heal. I think that makes you a stronger person."

We're sitting now on a bench in the Parc Monceau, talking about femininity



and motherhood. Nearby, pink trees are coming into leaf. Hearst, who is wearing a tweed cashmere knit dress and no coat, has long been inspired by strong women, from the medieval mystic Hildegard von Bingen to the journalist Oriana Fallaci, famous for her tough interviews with world leaders. She's proud of having designed a suit for Chelsea Manning for her first major interview after her release from prison.

Hearst's identical-twin girls were monoamniotic, she tells me, and shared both a placenta and an amniotic sac—a very high-risk pregnancy. “I have never been so scared in my life,” she says, “because I didn't know if I could psychologically overcome losing them. I never prayed so much.” She went into Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital in Manhattan at week 26 and spent the next eight weeks there, monitored around the clock. “The risk is that they'd strangle themselves with the amniotic sac,” she says. Her then-husband, Franklin Isaacson, who works in venture capital, slept at the hospital every night. The twins were born healthy. “I've lived through a lot of things that put things in perspective,” she says.

Her reshaped priorities come through in her designs, which are for women with a strong sense of self—women who know what it means to feel joy as much as to have fun. When she's in Paris, she has video calls with her twins. They help point the way to the future. They don't want fast fashion. Fashion houses, she told

me earlier, “have a big problem on their hands because the generations that are coming up are really not interested in consuming, in having too much of anything.” We're walking back from the park to her hotel now, and have met up with de Lavalette along the way. When I ask Hearst what would define success, she turns to de Lavalette and laughs. She'd like to live a good long life, she says—maybe even get a good night's sleep.

But then she focuses. As ever, she has a mission: “Can we really make a low-impact global business? Obviously I have the idea, but it takes a lot of people to execute it,” she says. “That's what we're striving for.” □

## SCENE STEALER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 70

*Intouchables*, the 2011 comedy in which he played a home-care aide to a wealthy quadriplegic. Sy's performance was a sensation (*The Intouchables* remains the most widely seen French-language film in the world), making him the first Black actor to win a César Best Actor award, France's version of an Oscar. In her 2020 documentary *Où sont les Noirs?*, about the long road to inclusion in French pop culture, the author and filmmaker Rokhaya Diallo titled a whole chapter “The Omar Sy Effect.” “The cinema is still so white in France,” she tells me, “but it's gotten better for Black actors in the last 10 years. Omar is a locomotive.”

The Omar Sy effect wasn't limited to France. The actress and producer Yara

Shahidi saw *The Intouchables* at 11, and it not only became her favorite film but worked as a sort of way forward for her as a comedic actress. “There's a level of realism Omar hits, even in comedy,” Shahidi says. “The effect that film had on me. . . . I've always been a creative person and didn't know whether acting was *the* avenue, but seeing his work in that movie showed me exponential possibilities.”

Sy, his wife, H el ene, and their four kids moved in 2012 to Los Angeles, where he has picked up supporting roles in Hollywood franchises like *X-Men* and *Jurassic World*. (A fifth child has since been born, while H el ene runs C eKeDuBonheur, a nonprofit that works to bring classes, events, and celebrity visits to children's wards at French hospitals, and Siyah Organics, a S en egalo-American organic-food-supplements company.) But it is in French cinema, where Sy remains prolific, that he continues to stretch his talent. The sumptuously filmed 2016 drama *Chocolat* required a new level of preparation. It's based on the true story of a 19th-century Black clown who became a national sensation, only to feel the deep sting of racism and end his life in obscurity. “*Chocolat* was the first film where I was telling myself, I'm an actor,” Sy says. “Before that, I said, I'm a comic who does movies. It was a lot of physical work, and big physical preparation for a role isn't something we do much of in France. It wasn't easy. It was based on a real person, and I felt his ghost with

# In This Issue

## Table of contents:

**12:** Dress, price upon request; louisvuitton.com. **Cover look:** **12:** Tailor, Leah Huntsinger. **Editor's letter:** **14:** Top right photo: Leather belted dress, \$12,395; (702) 675-9998. Bottom right photo: Coat, price upon request; louisvuitton.com. Dolce & Gabbana cap, \$225; dolcegabbana.com. The Frye Company boots, \$328; thefryecompany.com. Tailor, Nina Hannemann.

## THE DOCTOR IS IN

**46–47:** In this story: Tailor, Leah Huntsinger.

## THIS WOMAN'S WORK

**55:** Leather coat (\$16,359) and boots (\$1,595); chloe.com. **56–57:** Dress (\$4,995) and slides (\$695). Dress at (704) 366-0388. Slides at nordstrom.com. **59:** Dress (\$1,950) and flat mules (\$725); chloe.com. **60:** Leather dress (\$6,895) and belt (\$380); chloe.com. **61:** Puffer-poncho, \$3,895; chloe.com.

## ON THEIR GAMES

**62–63:** Bralette, \$38; freepeople.com. Commando bikini,

\$28; wearcommando.com. Tailor, Allison Cohen. **64–65:** Coat, shirt, tie, and pants, priced upon request; louisvuitton.com. Tailor, Bonnie Lewis. **67:** On Lee: Bodysuit, \$760; dionlee.com. Skims bandeau bra, \$28; skims.com. Tailor, Carole Bruns. On Manuel: Dress, price upon request; givenchy.com. Tailor, Allison Cohen. **68:** Dress, \$9,240; maison-alala.com. Tailor, Carole Bruns.

## SCENE STEALER

**71:** Coat, \$5,500; dior.com. Sweater (\$675) and cap (\$225); dolcegabbana.com. Boss pants, \$248; hugoboss.com. In this story: Tailor, Nina Hannemann.

## THE NEW BAGS

**72–73:** Boots, price upon request. Dress, price upon request. **74:** Gloves (price upon request) and jumpsuit (\$3,050). **75:** Bag and skirt suit, priced upon request. **76:** Bag, \$4,990. Dress, \$19,500. **77:** Necklace, \$1,690. **78–79:** Pochette, \$2,720. Sweater, price upon request. **80:** Bag, price upon request. Dress, \$3,290. Dress, price upon request. **81:** Bottega Veneta ring, \$980; bottegabeneta.com. In this story: Manicurist, Laura Forget. Tailor, Nina Hannemann.

## OUTER LIMITS

**84:** Jacket, \$3,450. Earrings, \$550; jenniferfisherjewelry.com. **85:** Jacket,

embroidered dress, T-shirt dress, and balloon skirt, priced upon request.

**86:** Celine by Hedi Slimane houndstooth blazer (worn under quilted jacket), \$2,950; celine.com. **87:** Long Johns, priced upon request. Earrings, \$550; jenniferfisherjewelry.com. In this story: Manicurist, Yuko Tsuchihashi. Tailor, Hailey Desjardins.

## GIVE ME THE NIGHT

**90:** Boots, \$1,950. **91:** Dress (price upon request) and bag (\$26,100). Sunglasses, \$358; andy-wolf.com. Earring, \$4,650 for pair; pomellato.com. Ring, \$566;

me a lot. But it also made me more relaxed about working in the States.”

It's normal for an overseas actor who has just scored a massive international hit to test the waters in Hollywood, though ambition wasn't what moved the whole family out. “I try to make a balance of time between working and being at home with my family,” Sy says. “We figured we'd do a big L.A. vacation year, put the kids in school somewhere and hang out. But it turned out it worked well for us. It was supposed to be a sabbatical year, and then we just stayed.” In Los Angeles, “fame was less heavy to bear for my kids,” he says. Before they decided to move, the Slys were living not far from Trappes, albeit in a more posh, pastoral situation. “We had a cool little life there, in a nice village, and then one day I went to pick up my son from school and someone said, ‘Ah, it's Omar's son.’ That scared me.” Sy wanted his children to find their own way, thrive on their own terms. “Being more anonymous in L.A. was reassuring,” he says. “I mean, we only know how to raise our own kids based on how we were brought up, and I don't know how to bring up a kid as a celebrity. I don't even know myself what it really means.”

Los Angeles does have its challenges. First, there is soccer, or the lack of it. “I tried to teach it to my kids,” Sy says. “One of my sons was a great player when we first got to the U.S., because his uncles are all hard-core fans. He was six then, and now he's 15, and he plays basketball.” He sighs. Then there is the food. “I know

a French guy here who does bread for restaurants, and he delivers to me sometimes. Same with cheese.” Sy delights in making *Thieboudienne*, the national dish of Senegal, one of his specialties in the kitchen, and he's also proud of his date cake with caramel frosting and *Blanquette de veau*. Food is one way Sy reminds his increasingly American kids of their roots. “I have a double job,” he says. “France needs to stay present in their lives, and Senegal too. Outside the house they're speaking English all the time, but back home, the language we speak and the food we make is where it comes back. I have a lot to do.”

He has a lot to film, too. Sy returns to *Jurassic World* as the velociraptor trainer Barry Sembène next year. There is an action comedy by Louis Leterrier, *Lupin's* director, that wrapped in June, even as *Lupin* has been renewed for a second season (broken into two parts, as was season one). The important thing to Sy is to keep pushing to tell new and different stories, reflective of the world we live in today. “I'm optimistic,” he says. “Life and history move forward. It's hard to put on the brakes.” □

## RIISING TO THE OCCASION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 92

A few weeks later, I tried again. For my mother's birthday, she and I went to dinner with a few of her friends at Majorelle, the French/Mediterranean restaurant on East 63rd Street that she loves for its high-ceilinged courtyard and chicken

curry. It was a big birthday, and it seemed important to dress for the occasion. Dress codes may be passé; dressing up, however—for the people you are seeing as well as the occasion—feels more urgent as we celebrate coming together again.

For Mama's birthday, I wanted to wear something that would make her smile and feel fêted—something irreverent but easy. Both Marni's Francesco Risso and Bottega's Daniel Lee have proposed chic, glammed-up versions of the comfort and ease we have adapted ourselves to over the past 18 months, and with that in mind I chose feather-trimmed Sleeper pajamas—because what better way to emerge from life on my couch than in an accessorized version of what I had been living in for a year?—and added crystal-buckle-embellished Miu Miu slides, dangly paste earrings, and an Olympia Le-Tan clutch embroidered with a motif from *To Catch a Thief*—a favorite film of ours.

My mother happily smoothed her hand over my purse; she stroked my ostrich cuffs and giggled when they accidentally swam through my crème anglaise at dessert. The four women at the table all commented on one another's earrings, which ranged from costume to JAR. There was joy in hearing the stories of everyone's accessories. We were all newly vaccinated, and out together on this night because of that, celebrating not just my mother's birthday but science and resilience and one another—and isn't all that worth dressing up for? □

charlottechesnais.fr.  
**93:** On Bodian: Jacket (\$1,220), shirt (\$690), and pants (\$675); driesvannoten-la.com. On Dia: Dress, price upon request. Chopard earring, \$32,000 for pair; chopard.com. On Tougaard: Dress (\$3,545) and bra (\$590). Del Core sandal, price upon request; delcore.com. On Qasim: Dress (price upon

request) and boots (\$2,060). Agmes earring, \$440 for pair; agmesnyc.com. On Resval: Jacket (\$2,400) and pants (\$840); celine.com. Casablanca x New Balance sneakers, price upon request; casablancaparis.com. **94:** Dress (\$18,000) and earrings (\$1,250). **95:** On Dia: Earring, \$32,000 for pair;

chopard.com. Sandals, \$685; brothervelliess.com. On Tougaard: Earring, \$1,200 for pair; milamorejewelry.com. Sandal, price upon request; delcore.com. **96:** On Dia: Dress, \$6,700. Necklace, \$679; swarovski.com. On Bodian: Jacket, shirt, and pants, priced upon request; lanvin.com. On Tougaard: Jeweled top (\$1,920), high-neck, printed

top (\$570), and bracelet (\$610); pacorabanne.com. Bottom left photo: Jacket, pants, and sandals, priced upon request. Pomellato earring, \$3,000 for pair; pomellato.com. **97:** On Tougaard: Earring, \$1,200 for pair; milamorejewelry.com. On Qasim: Dress, \$7,200. Earrings, \$440; agmesnyc.com. Dress, \$12,000.

Earring, \$32,000 for pair; chopard.com.

## INDEX

**98–99:** 6. Ring, \$4,680. 7. Bag, \$3,500. 11. Pendant, \$2,500. 14. Earrings, \$7,450.

## LAST LOOK

**104:** Shoulder bag, gucci.com

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# Last Look



## Gucci bag, \$2,400

How did this elegant accessory come to see spots? Simple: Creative director Alessandro Michele had them printed on the maison's classic monogram Jackie bag—a simple satchel with a horse bit–like closure strap, named after Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis—in a glorious red hue, and while he was at it, he added a couple of sporty stripes to further liven things up. Take her with you no matter where you're headed: She'll be sure to attract all the right kind of attention.

IMAGE BY NIC BURDEKIN AND LUCAS LEFLER  
PHOTOGRAPHED AT DEMISCH DANANT

DETAILS. SEE IN THIS ISSUE.





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