

FINANCIAL TIMES

# HTSI

26 NOVEMBER  
2022

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THIS WINTER



*Cartier*









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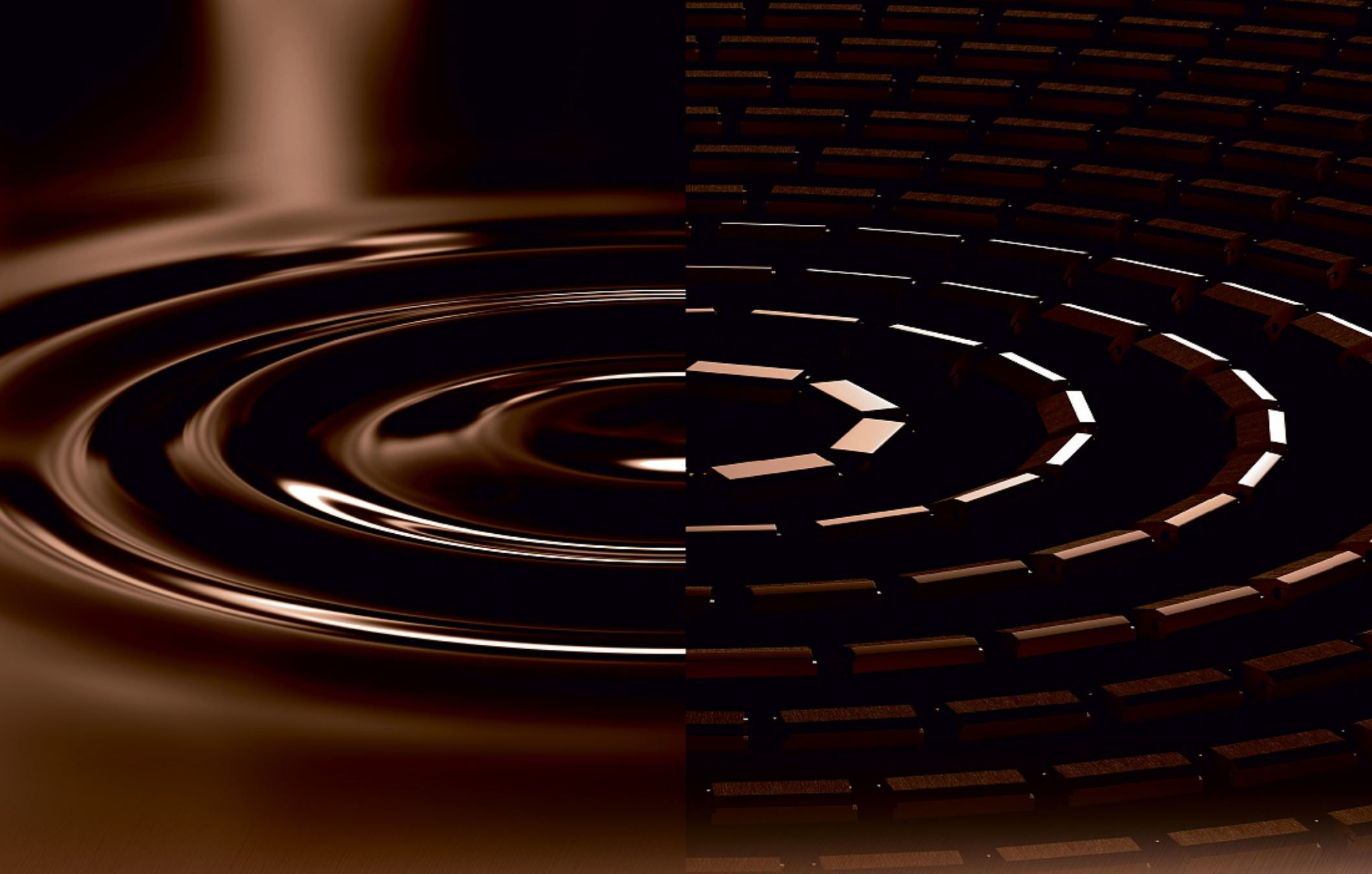
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Dom Pérignon  
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# HTSI

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PHOTOGRAPH: RASMUS WENG, KARLSEN, QUENTIN DE BRIEY, MALICK BODIAN WEARS STEFAN COOKE WOOL MOCK-NECK CARDIGAN, £659, FERRAGAMO SCOTTISH WOOL TROUSERS, £960





Happy Hermès Holidays!



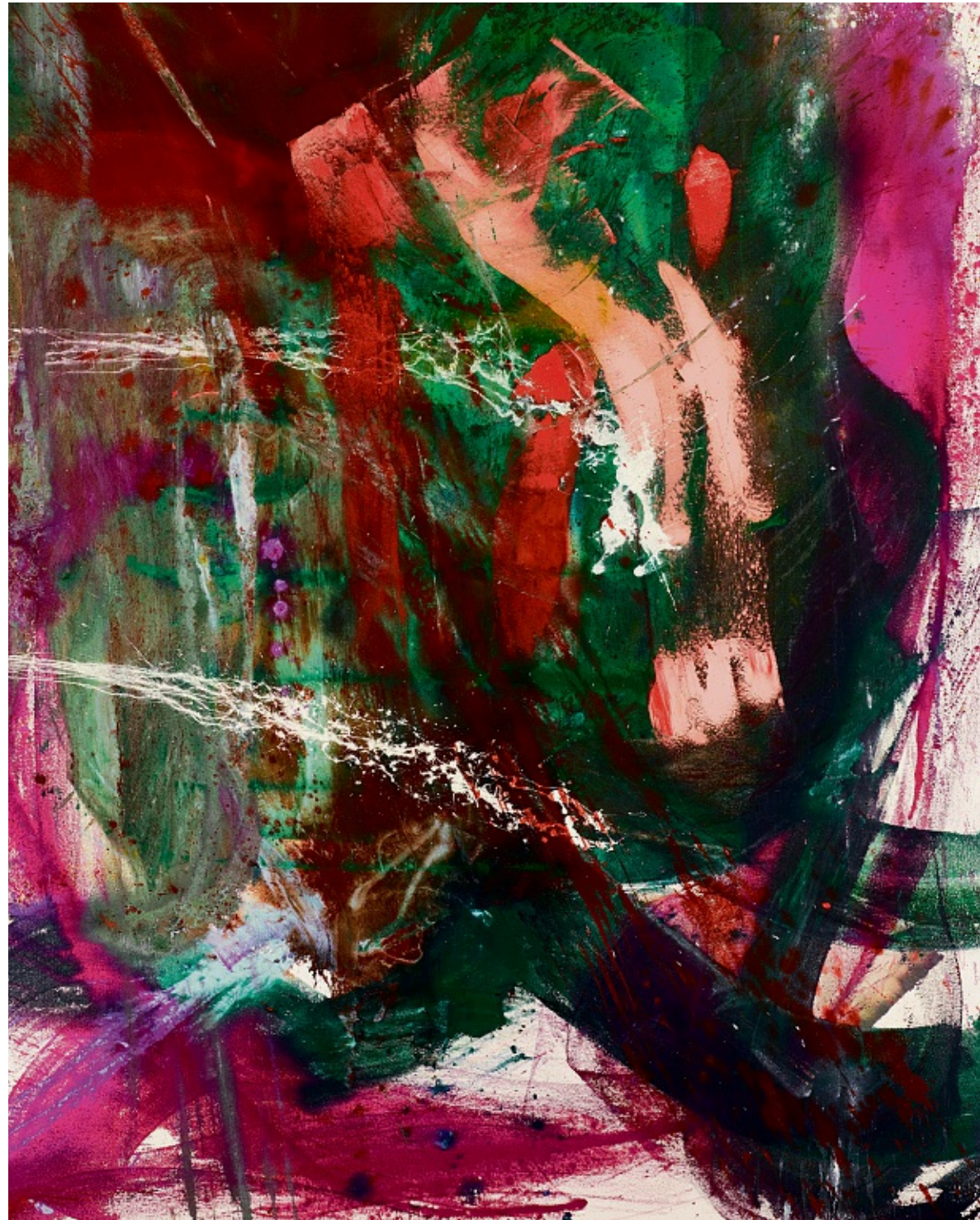
# OPENING SHOT

## BEAUTIFUL NOISE

Jack Coulter's debut solo show translates an eclectic playlist of tunes into abstract artworks

"An acidic, almost teal green" appears in the mind of the artist Jack Coulter when he hears Belinda Carlisle's zingy '80s anthem "World Without You". The painter lives with the sense-mixing neurological condition synaesthesia. Working with oil, water and emulsion on canvas, he translates this vision into a sprawling, splattered "dreamlike visual". Twenty-five of these sonically inspired works, each accompanied by a QR code to allow viewers "to listen to every painting", make up the Irish painter's first solo exhibition, which is on show at Sotheby's in London until 15 December.

The audio-visual playlist reflects Coulter's eclectic tastes - from Janet Jackson's delicate dance tune "Together Again" to "Daylight" by Harry Styles, whose mellow pop translates as "deep shades of red and meandering yellows". Or Don McClean's soothing folk hit "Vincent", which produced "swirls of sound". "It's always intuition and instinct," Coulter says of his process. "More often than not, I'm completely transfixed by what I'm experiencing. It's like a never-ending moment saturated by colour and sound." **BAYA SIMONS** *You Can't Change the Music of Your Soul* is open by appointment at Sotheby's London until 15 December



Right: *London Calling (The Clash)*, 2022, by Jack Coulter

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GUY BOLONGARO

After feeling burnt out from a career in social work, Bolongaro turned to photography as a sort of therapy. "I needed a daily creative activity that would help me direct my gaze outwards rather than at my navel," he says. "It became a compulsion and then eventually my profession." He shot DJ Mimi Xu for this week's Aesthete column. "Any portrait shoot that includes a fluffbag Himalayan cat is OK with me," he says.



RASMUS WENG KARLSEN

Known for his raw but playful work, the Danish fashion photographer published his first book, *Journey*, last year, featuring snapshots of his travels, from Hat Yai to Madrid. When not working he still likes to take photos, mainly of his children Jens and Eva. In this issue he shot the jeweller Sophie Bille Brahe and her chef brother Frederik's family feast. "I am glad to have been trusted to do it in my style. I wanted it to be happy and spontaneous," he says.



LILY BERTRAND-WEBB

"Lip reading is my superpower," says the half-Dominican, half-British photographer. "My deafness helps me to pick up visual cues about a person's character." When not shooting portraits of Paul McCartney, Damien Hirst and Rita Ora, she's in Cornwall surfing. For this issue she was invited into the homes of the Delevingnes, the Boxers, and Rejina Pyo and husband Jordan Bourke, to capture their celebratory get-togethers.



JAKE CURTIS

"I found photography at a young age," says Curtis. "I set up a darkroom at home and was totally hooked." He works predominantly across interiors, creating a timeless aesthetic and meticulously crafted lighting. For us, he shot Charaf Tajer, the Paris-born designer and founder of fashion brand Casablanca. "He was up for trying different things and was interested in the creative process," says Curtis. "It was a fun shoot and he made it very easy."



*Chopard*

THE ARTISAN OF EMOTIONS – SINCE 1860

HAUTE JOAILLERIE







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I always enjoy putting the celebration issue together. Its themes – friendship, fun, feasting – are so wholesome, so singularly lacking in friction. There is something uplifting in creating something that seeks only to raise the spirits. And, following another bleak year of news, the call for cheer seems painfully apt.

This week's issue delivers high spirits aplenty. I'm especially fond of our How To Host It special, where we've invited ourselves into some of the most stylish homes to find out the secrets behind a successful party (page 84). According to our hosts, food in abundance, a generosity of attitude and party games are the answer. The Delevingne sisters Poppy and Chloe admit a penchant for playing Sardines and performing Disney karaoke, while Jackson Boxer's brood get so distracted by the goings-on that they frequently forget about pudding. Photographers Lily Bertrand-Webb, Adrianna Glaviano, Kate Martin and Rasmus Weng Karlsen have captured some beautiful moments of emotional warmth and spontaneity.

Meanwhile, in Senegal, photographer Quentin De Briey, stylist Andreas Peter Krings and the models Malick Bodian, Elhadji Fall, Kathia Ndong and Pape Seck shoot another take on celebrating that draws on the new elegance. This story appears a few days before Chanel arrives in Senegal, now a fast-growing luxury destination, to stage a Métiers d'Art show. Its fashionability will thrill as many as those who want it to remain a secret. Certainly, having seen the pictures, I wanted to go straight away. As for the shoot, fans of the late photographer Malick Sidibé will recognise the homage: in particular, the image of the couple dancing (page 78-79) draws on Sidibé's portrait "Nuit de Noël", shot in 1963 – a title that lends itself also to our cover.

Dancing is mandatory at any gathering claiming a party flavour; dancing on rollerskates takes it to a new level. Rising rents, zoning rules and changing demographics have found the roller rink imperilled. But thanks to Liberty Ross and other entrepreneurs, a new generation of skaters are rediscovering the joy of the roller disco (page 59). After all, what could be more liberating than spinning around a circular rink in a leotard and leggings?

No? Spoilsport. Maybe glitter's more your thing (page 45). You must at least enjoy the opportunity for a dress-up? I've written before about the ubiquity of the pearl in both men's and women's jewels, and in this issue Maria Fitzpatrick further unpicks its renaissance (page 51). As with most trends, certain styles and stones will ultimately have their season. But just when you think the moment for pearls must have passed, comes another, even more popular, iteration.

Lastly, it would be a slightly less buoyant party season if we didn't get the booze in (page 107). I have been living a life of quiet (and rather dull) sobriety since the beginning of August: an attempt to offer my liver some chance of recovery. But having been terribly, ever so good, I'm ready to end this period of abstinence and, like Patsy Stone (the patron saint of celebration), crack open a bottle of Bolly. ■ HTSI

@jellison22

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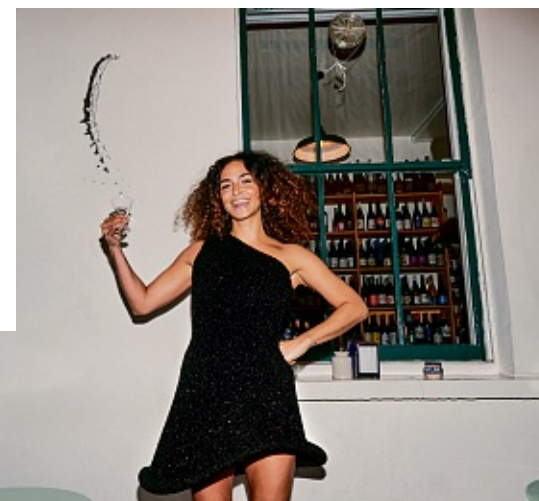
CHANEL PEARL AND LEATHER MINI EVENING BAG, POA (PAGE 32)



Left: "Dakar dapper" (page 68). Below: the inspiration, Malick Sidibé's *Nuit de Noël* (Happy-Club), Mali, 1963



Below: Anna Shaffer's favourite places to party in London (page 110)







Victoria Collection

TIFFANY & CO.



# Mimi Xu

The composer, producer and DJ loves her Sennheiser headphones, her cat Miles and diving into melancholia

INTERVIEW BY VICTORIA WOODCOCK  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GUY BOLONGARO

**M**Y PERSONAL STYLE SIGNIFIER is wearing 50 per cent menswear and 50 per cent really feminine things, such as a very tight Alexander McQueen leather pencil skirt, which is like a second skin. I have friends who are fashion designers and who understand my aesthetic – like Francesco Risso, the creative director of Marni. I walk in Marni's shows and he knows never to put a dress on me. I love the architect look.

**THE LAST THING I BOUGHT AND LOVED** was an artwork by Cornelia Parker, one of her *Red Spot* pieces, which I bought at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. I fell in love with it and then realised it was hers.

**NO PARTY IS COMPLETE WITHOUT** good music and a good sound system. I've been to parties, big events, where they were playing music on a phone. There's no point throwing a party if you have a bad sound system. You need to feel the vibration of the bass to dance. For me, the English brand ATC is the best on the market.

**THE BEST SOUVENIR I'VE BROUGHT HOME** is some green rocks from the Greek village of Lindos, on Rhodes. We went this summer to celebrate the birthday of a friend, whose dad is David Gilmour from Pink Floyd. He bought an incredible 15th-century house there in the '60s. Apparently Marianne Faithfull stayed there, and The Rolling Stones. It has seen a lot; so many musicians have passed by, they've definitely left an imprint. I picked up a bunch of rocks from the beach as a souvenir, and they're now in my bathroom.

**MY DRINK OF CHOICE** is tequila, lime and soda – and lots of it.

**THE BEST BOOK I'VE READ IN THE PAST YEAR** is *IM Pei* by Pei and Aileen Reid. I recently visited The Contemporary Art Museum of Luxembourg and the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, both his buildings. My father [Albert Yaying Xu] designed the acoustics in

## THERE'S NO POINT THROWING A PARTY IF YOU HAVE A BAD SOUND SYSTEM

these spaces. Pei's museums have a sense of warmth; the way he used wood and stone, they just make you feel happiness and light – you are probably not as focused on the art though, that's the only problem.

**THE LAST MUSIC I DOWNLOADED** explains my scattered brain. One song is called "Whoop!" by R Can & Sonic Noise. I heard it at a party; it's a kind of techno dancehall track. It's so good, so spontaneous. And then I downloaded a piece of music by Tan Dun, who wrote the score for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. I've just been to a concert of his at the Philharmonie Luxembourg where he did "The Firebird" by Stravinsky and then his own composition, incorporating iPhones. He got everyone in the audience to download a track of birdsong and conducted all of us playing it on our phones, then went into his symphonic piece. It was just beautiful.

**I HAVE A COLLECTION OF** portable lights – different types, different sizes... I'm really



Above: Mimi Xu at home in London, with her cat Miles. Below: some of her vinyl records. Left: *IM Pei* by Aileen Reid, the best book she's read this year





## THE AESTHETE

Below: as a teenager Xu liked Madonna's early look. Right: objects in her house. Far right: songs from her party playlist: "Final Credits" by Midland and "Only You" by Steve Monite



I DON'T QUEUE FOR NIGHTCLUBS, BUT I'LL QUEUE FOR FOOD



Above: a strawberry hat, a gift from her friend Mykki Blanco. Left: Xu at home in London, wearing a pair of her favourite chunky shoes. Below: some of her collection of jewellery

nerdy. I use them in my performance art with my music partner Gillian Maguire. We're called Awkward Moments. And, to be more sexy, I also have a huge number of chunky shoes. Miu Miu is doing great ones at the moment. And I like a very low-key brand from Singapore called Charles & Keith. I don't do skinny heels. "Life On Venus" (Trey Mirror remix) by Awkward Moments is out now

**IN MY FRIDGE YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND** lots of green vegetables, Greek yoghurt, gluten-free beers, plenty of chocolate. I love food, and my partner, Jan Kennedy, is an incredible cook – I think he's a wannabe chef – and fills me with fantastic but quite unhealthy food.

**THE THING I COULDN'T DO WITHOUT** is headphones – there's always a pair in my bag. Because I lose them a lot, I tend not to invest in them. But my partner gave me a pair by Sennheiser that I keep at home. They're so accurate; they're like proper studio speakers. They rarely lie to me. *Sennheiser HD 660S, £429*

**AN INDULGENCE I WOULD NEVER FORGO** is being constantly stimulated. I always need to be awake and learning and entertained. I think that's quite self-indulgent.

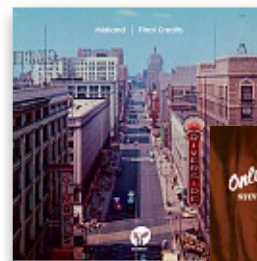
**I DON'T BELIEVE IN STYLE ICONS.** I believe that we all should find our own style rather than follow trends or influencers. I look up to musicians, because I feel music has always led fashion and not the other way around. Growing up, I was taken by Madonna's early look and hip-hop. I was into streetwear, but I wasn't a B-boy.

**I'VE RECENTLY DISCOVERED** Santiago de Compostela, in north-west Spain, the place of pilgrimage for Catholics. It's an incredible little town. It obviously has this medieval sense of spirituality, but also the most amazing seafood. We went to the Taberna O Gato Negro, which feels like it hasn't changed for the past 50 or 60 years. We queued up for an hour to get in there. I don't queue for nightclubs, but I'll queue for food.

**THE BEAUTY STAPLES I'M NEVER WITHOUT** are Augustinus Bader's The Cream, which I trialed with them. It's extremely expensive. So my other go-to is Weleda Skin Food. I have a needle phobia, so I think it's going to be a facelift at 70 or nothing. But something that works really well for me is using a jade face roller. And drinking a lot of water.

**AN OBJECT I WOULD NEVER PART WITH** is my four-terabyte LaCie external hard drive, which I treasure. It's got my life on it. So much music, so many films. It's a big loss when it crashes. I back it up now. But is it all going to exist in 100 years, I wonder?

**MY FAVOURITE BUILDING** is the Chichu Art Museum in Naoshima, Japan, by Tadao Ando. He uses concrete, so you might think it would be cold, but it's not because he uses all natural light. When you go into the



**Monet room** – where there are five big *Water Lilies* paintings – you have to take off your shoes. It's a religious experience. I love modernist Asian architecture because there is a sense of warmth in the work.

**MY WELLBEING GURU** is Wim Hof, the iceman. I don't do many beauty-treatment things: I cut my own hair because I can't be bothered to go to the hairdresser; I don't get my nails done. But I love doing Wim Hof's breathwork. It's really powerful, and he cracks me up. I was inspired by his 10-minute routines to make a breathwork soundtrack with my musical partner, because I can't stand the music in his videos.

**MY FAVOURITE APPS** are Spotify, of course; Chords, for working out the key in my music; I also like BeReal, which is the opposite of what other social media apps are about – you can be on the toilet [when you're prompted for a photo], you know? It's quite funny. And then I use a BPM counter a lot, to find the speed of a song, and a thing called Interval Timer to exercise. I create my own exercise routine on a six-minute cycle, which I do five times to create a half-hour workout. And then a website I like is DuckDuckGo – an alternative to Google that doesn't track you.

**THE WORK OF ART THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING FOR ME** was *The Visitor* by Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson. It's a film spread across nine screens – each shows a musician in a different space or rooms, in the garden, in the bathtub, and they all play a song together. It's a really powerful piece that has stuck with me.

**SOME OF THE BEST ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED** was from a choreographer called Lindsay Kemp, who worked with David Bowie and helped to create Ziggy Stardust. I did a performance with him a few years ago, and I'm a bit of a reluctant performer, but Lindsay said: "You need to put intention in every gesture – even if it's just scratching your nose." It really helped to improve my stage presence. There's also a David Bowie quote I live by. He said: "Go a little bit out of your depth and when you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom, you're just about in the right place to do something exciting."

**WHEN I NEED TO FEEL INSPIRED** I dive into melancholia. This might sound very strange, but I go into a mildly depressed state – like "I'm not good enough" – and that stimulates ideas.

**MY PARTY PLAYLIST RIGHT NOW** includes "Final Credits" by Midland – a crowd-pleaser – and "Only You" by Steve Monite. If no one is dancing on these two tracks, then just give up. ■HTSI



Above: a look inside Xu's fridge, which includes gluten-free beer, greens and Greek yoghurt







**BVLGARI**  
ROMA



QUATRE COLLECTION

# BOUCHERON

PARIS SINCE 1858



# THE FIX

INTERVIEW

## CASABLANCA CALLING

From a €3,000 investment Charaf Tajer has taken his brand of louche, loud escapism to a turnover of €40mn. He tells *Aleks Cvetkovic* why his optimistic vision is working

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAKE CURTIS



Casablanca founder Charaf Tajer at home in London. Behind him is a 1970s print and a record by Jorge Ben Jor





Far left: Tajer in front of Expo, 2016, by Henrietta Dubrey. Above: cotton zip-up jacket, £610. Left: silk Plat a Dessert trousers, £740

become Starbucks,” he says. “For me, the world needs idealism more than dystopia.” Casablanca isn’t countercultural, but it’s certainly eclectic. Alongside his French-Moroccan roots (the brand is named after the city in which his parents met), Tajer draws on a heady mix of design movements and his own broad travels (he’s been to Japan 26 times alone) for his collections. “I’m very into brutalist architecture, I love art deco, I’m really into classic French and Parisian design, and the Memphis Milano movement, but it’s all about the mix,” he explains. “I like to take things like these and use them to create the new.”

Casablanca’s current autumn-winter collection, called *Le Monde Diplomatique*, celebrates the golden era of French aviation. Brocade-trimmed bell-boy jackets meet drainpipe trousers and horsebit loafers; Princess Diana-esque checked jackets mix with bright candy colours; and maximalist gold-buttoned pilots’ blazers are inspired by Concorde’s red, white and blue livery. For his next spring-summer collection, entitled *Future Optimisto*, Tajer references his travels to Mexico, with pumped-up Vaquero style, stetsons and technicolour western shirts. “If Casablanca was a car, it would be a classic Mercedes [...] and if it was a music genre it would be bossa nova. It has the classic, but also some of the exotic,” Tajer adds. His creations are more elevated than streetwear, and while there are clear resortwear accents, the brand delivers a full-look, year-round offering.

“Charaf has both a clear and ambitious vision of what he wants to achieve, and a community of artists and creatives whom he has gathered around him from his past life in fashion and music,” says Sophie Brocart, CEO of Patou and Tajer’s mentor for the LVMH Prize, which he was one of eight finalists for in 2020. “Instead of creating a streetwear offer like many others with links to music, he followed his intuition and went to create a luxurious, colourful and joyful collection [which] hit a chord with his community, and with the celebrities who rushed to wear Casablanca,” she says.

**“IF CASABLANCA WERE A MUSIC GENRE IT WOULD BE BOSSA NOVA”**

“I also think Casablanca is the right brand at the right moment. It evokes escapism at a time when men, particularly in the US, have started to wear bolder, less conventional silhouettes and move out of streetwear.”

Tajer himself is crystal clear on the brand’s positioning, and on his role as a French creative director. “I grew up looking at and loving Cartier, Chanel and Hermès. Being from Paris (Tajer was born there, after his parents moved from Morocco), I feel like I have a direct link to their aesthetic and savoir faire,” he says. “I’m focused on the idea of luxury without any compromise.”

Tajer and his team work as a unit from the brand’s studio in London, where he is now based, to create every sample that makes it into a finished collection in-house, before passing those samples to his chosen manufacturers, each of which is heavily vetted. One day, adds Tajer, he’d like to have his own factories to control the whole process from start to finish. “The thing that

makes Casablanca special to me is Charaf’s dedication to doing things the right way,” says model and creative director Richard Biedul, who walked in Casablanca’s SS23 show. “Whether it’s the fabrication or the construction of the garment, it’s always done by the best people.”

**SINCE 2020, TAJER AND HIS TEAM** have partnered with New Balance on three limited-edition sneaker models, and in April this year worked with Bulgari to produce *Après Tennis*, a range of luxury women’s bags inspired by the golden age of court-side style. In September, Casablanca’s first collaborative range of Globe-Trotter luggage was released too. Now the team has moved beyond collaborations to launch Casablanca’s first in-house sneaker, the *Atlantis*, this month.

Tajer’s creativity doesn’t turn off when he leaves work each day. His home is in many ways an extension of the Casablanca aesthetic, with his passions for architecture and furniture design, and markers of his Moroccan heritage, all on show. “Interior design is very important to me. Home is a space for the wellbeing of my family. It’s also a place that isn’t ‘over-visual’ because I always need the space to be inspired. I don’t want to over-saturate myself.”

Despite Tajer’s success, he still feels like an outsider to the predominantly white fashion scene, and wants Casablanca to be a vehicle for change. “I’m still unusual in the world of design,” he says. “I’ll feel like less of an outsider the day there are more people like me in the design landscape. My work is also to make sure that the demographic changes and our vocabularies change – to allow more people in.”

This is an aspiration that was shared by one of Tajer’s close friends, the late Virgil Abloh, for whom design was also a vehicle to encourage change. Abloh, like Tajer, trained as an architect and had an instinct for mastering different creative disciplines, whether architecture, fashion or music. “I loved Virgil,” Tajer says. “He cared more about the impact he made than doing fashion for its own sake.”

What impact does Tajer hope to have with his own brand, then? “The most important thing for me is to deliver messages about our optimistic future, playing with iconographies and codes to inspire people,” he says. “Today, I’m doing fashion, maybe tomorrow I’ll do something else. The message is all I care about.” ■ **HTSI**

As opening gambits go, Paris-born designer Charaf Tajer’s is unequivocal. “We’re looking at the beauty of the world,” he says of his brand Casablanca, which he founded in 2018. Through it he’s cultivated an energising – and immediately recognisable – visual language with louche, maximalist designs for men and women and the occasional nod to glam ‘80s styling.

It’s a highly curated aesthetic that is chiming with shoppers – particularly millennials and Gen Z. Tajer started the brand with an initial outlay of €3,000, launching at Paris Fashion Week with appointments held in his mother’s living room; today, he employs a team of 60 and turnover is more than €40mn, growing 100 per cent year on year.

Before launching Casablanca, the 37-year-old was a partner in Parisian creative collective Pain O Chokolat, co-founder of clothing label Pigalle, and he also launched the hit nightclub Le Pompon. He’s had no formal training in fashion design or brand building; Tajer puts Casablanca’s rapid growth down to his singular point of view. “I think we all have this little voice inside us that we sometimes mute because society is saying something else,” he explains. “I think you find happiness when you listen to that voice without any compromise. When I launched Casablanca, my instinct was going against everything I saw in the fashion world.”

To Tajer, much of the fashion industry had become clichéd and was in dire need of positive energy: “Counterculture has almost



Above: leather Monogram Jeanne bag, £1,450. Right: silk Place Casa shirt, £655. Below: wool-mix Aviation miniskirt, £440



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FFERRONE Boyd medium glass set, \$210

ARMANI BEAUTY Lip Power Long Wear lipstick in 403, £33

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LOUIS VUITTON preowned leather sandals, £250, reluxefashion.com

PRADA double satin minidress, £2,500

CHANEL pearl, leather and metal mini evening bag, POA

SAINT LAURENT crepe maxi dress, £2,175



DAVID MORRIS gold, diamond and ceramic Asiyah bangle, £25,000

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TOM FORD silk-satin pre-tied bow tie, £190, mrporter.com



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ATU BODY COUTURE sequin and poly-mix Comet slip dress, £1,132, farfetch.com

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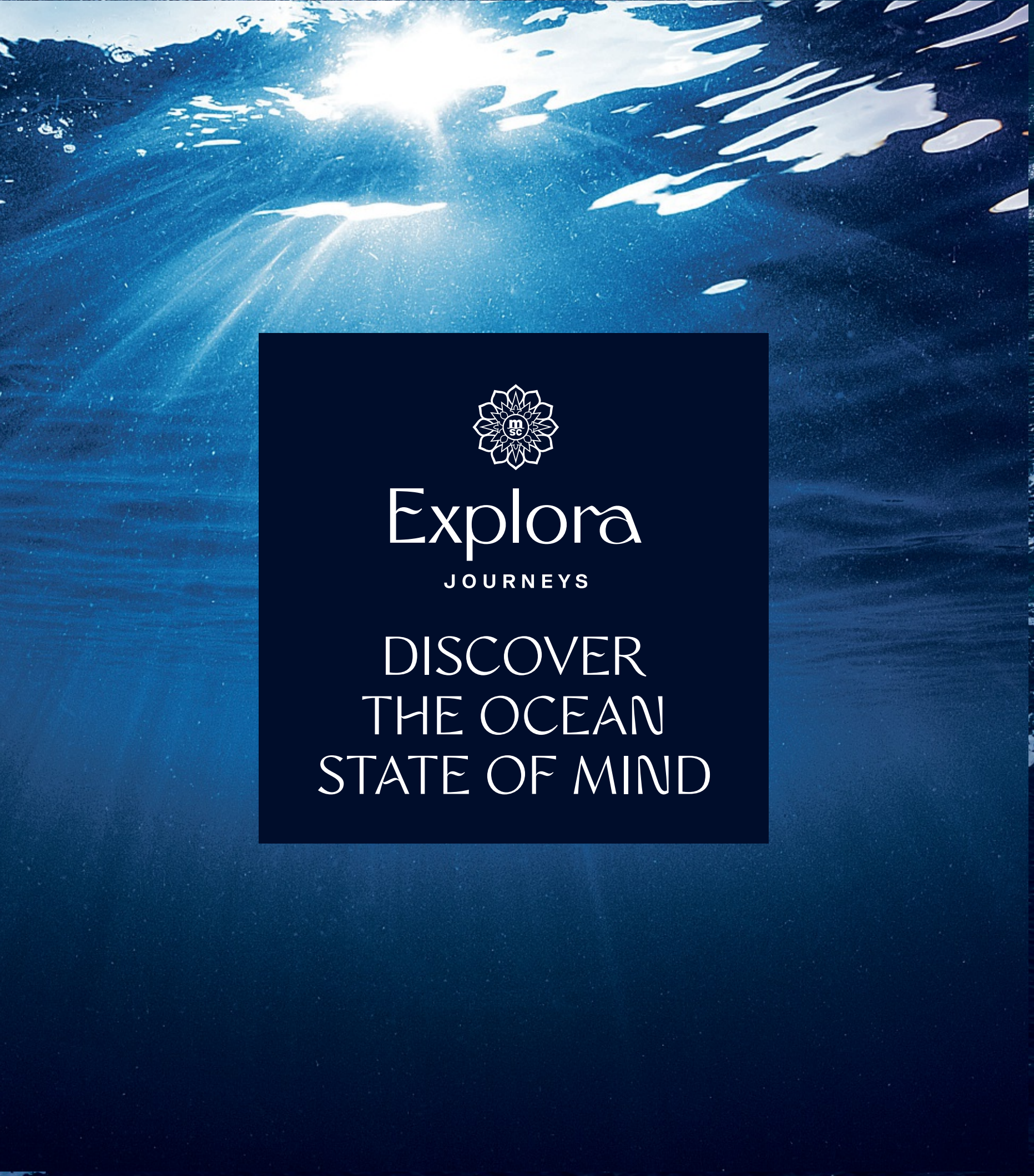


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Hawaii Collection





PRADA metal mesh double skirt, £1,790, and brushed leather pumps, £1,020

Below right: MILÓ MARIA leather trousers, £720. CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN crepe satin Konstantinella sandals, £1,450

ACCESSORIES

# LIFE AND SOLE

Step out in the season's sharpest party shoes

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREA URBEZ  
STYLING BY AYLIN BAYHAN







Above: ALEXANDER MCQUEEN silk taffeta, satin and tulle dress, £5,990, and sequin embroidered Heinous Punk pumps, £2,290

Right: JIMMY CHOO crystal and suede Malibu wedge boots, £7,000



Left: DOLCE & GABBANA leather Baroque DG heeled sandals, £975





CHANEL



# THE FIX



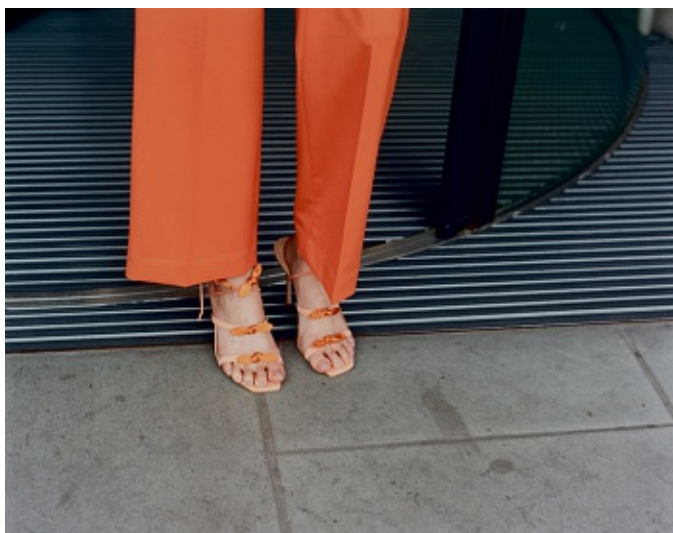
Above: LOUIS VUITTON leather trousers, £2,910, and glazed leather Fame platform pumps, £975

Left: LOEWE jersey print dress, £895, and leather Bow sandals, £725



Below: DIOR denim trench raincoat, £1,890, and embroidered mesh and rubber D'Motion pumps, £1,890

Model, Seng Khan at The Squad. Casting, Tiago Martins at Ben Grimes. Hair and make-up, Liz Daxauer at Caren using Living Proof. Stylist's assistant, Meg Edmond



Above: MANOLO BLAHNIK crepe de chine Fiocco shoes, £745. &OTHER STORIES cotton-mix trousers, £59







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VISUAL ARTS

## THE NEW GLITTERATI

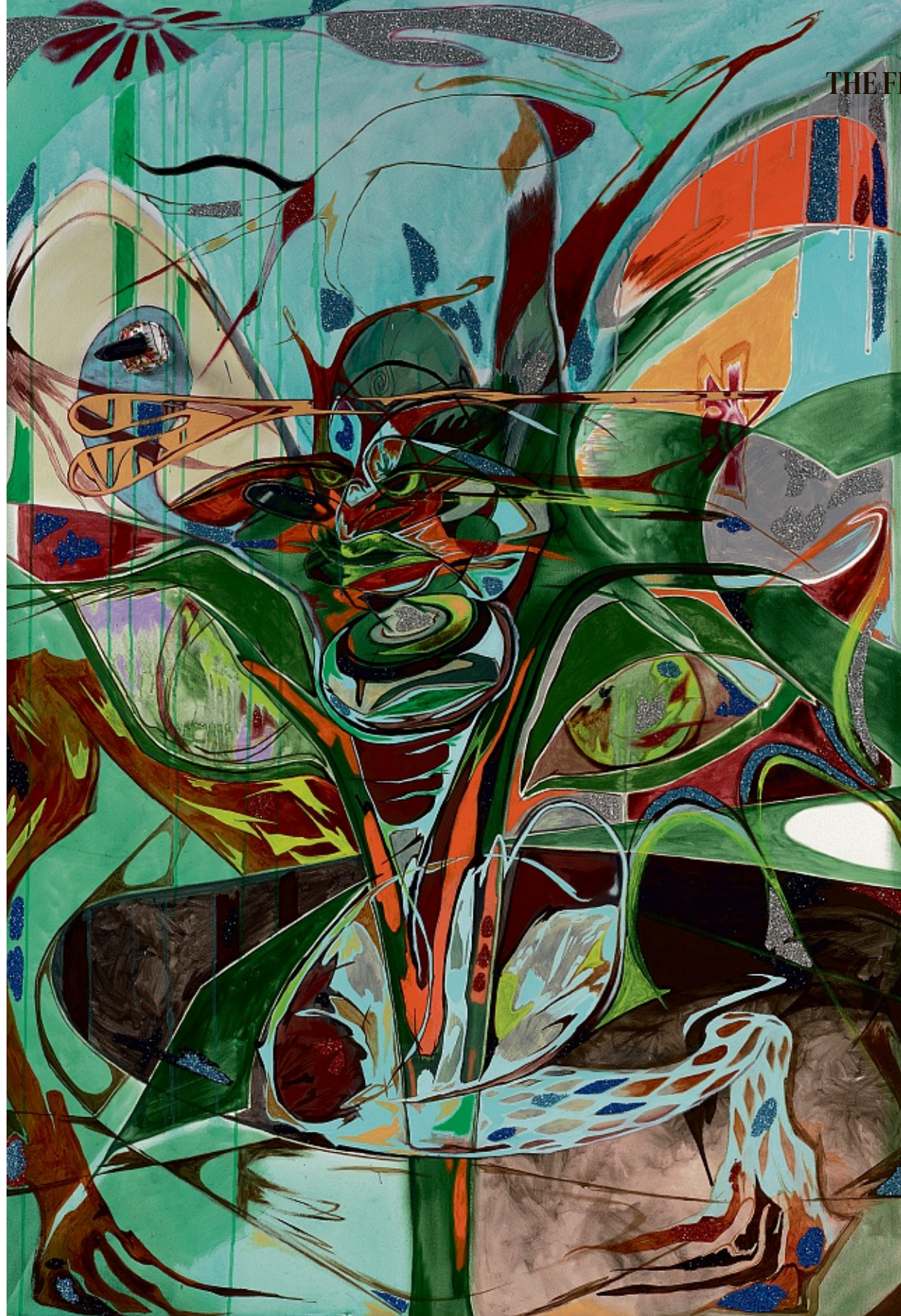
A little sprinkling of light on a canvas can, it turns out, be a radical act. By *Charlotte Jansen*

In 1975, Howardena Pindell, a zealous young Yale graduate from Philadelphia living in New York, decided to add glitter to her abstract paintings. Inspired by the latex works of the sculptor Eva Hesse, Pindell “loved the way glitter created texture on the surface – caught the shifting typography of light”, as the 79-year-old artist says from her studio in New York. Chintzy, cheerful and accessible, glitter evokes disco balls and dancefloors, cabaret costumes and cheap children’s craft. Nearly 50 years on from Pindell’s first efforts, many artists are drawn to its optical potential – but its patina of luxury and prosperity can also serve as a way of asking more difficult questions.

Last summer, an extensive exhibition of Pindell’s works – which also incorporate perfume, talc and sequins – at Kettle’s Yard, Cambridge, showed exactly how dazzling, and avant-garde, her use of glitter has been. But Pindell has always been a pioneer. A member of a co-op of feminists who founded the legendary AIR gallery at 97 Wooster Street in 1972 (now housed in the Dumbo neighbourhood of Brooklyn), she was one of the women who set about shaking up New York City’s male-dominated art scene. In the 1970s, she worked at MoMA, becoming the first black female curator on staff before resigning in 1979 in protest against a discriminatory exhibition. After a car accident damaged her memory, she turned to painting full-time. Introducing glitter “may have been a reaction to the fabricated work and minimalism” popular at the time, she muses. Glitter represented beauty, the touch of the human hand, and it emanated light.

Yet Pindell soon discovered that all that glitters doesn’t turn to gold. Her works were

Top: *After Midnight*, 2021, by Chris Martin. Right: *Catch moments (shes watching)*, 2022, by Theresa Chromati. Below right: *Sorority Kid: Dre*, 2021, by Amani Lewis



broadly dismissed, with critics unwilling to engage with either the themes she addressed or the medium she used. Her use of glitter was widely misunderstood, with one newspaper critic writing that he would like to have sex under her paintings. By the 1980s Pindell moved away from glitter, only returning to the material in the 2000s. One of the derided glitter works from the late 1970s, a vanilla-hued giant measuring about seven by 8.5 feet, *Untitled #24*, sold for \$1,134,000 at auction at Christie’s in May this year – a record figure for a work by the artist. “Isn’t that crazy?” Pindell laughs.

Across the Atlantic, two decades after Pindell’s early feminist experimentations, Chris Ofili sprinkled his monumental-scale “hip-hop” version of the Holy Virgin Mary with scintillating clouds of glitter, applied to the canvas alongside elephant dung. The explosively popular and provocative work

defined the burgeoning YBA generation and opened up the possibilities of using contradictory, unconventional materials in radical and politicised ways: in Ofili’s iconic work, decorative glimmer provided a thin

veil of glamour, contrasting with the messier earthy elements of a real woman’s bare body.

Glitter has its own regional resonances too. Currently showing at

Venice Biennale’s *The Milk of Dreams* exhibition (until 27 November) are the eye-catching textile works of Haitian artist Myrlande Constant, which are derived from the tradition of *drapo Vodou* (Vodou flags). These intricately detailed, glistening needlework pieces were typically made to adorn temples and for ceremonial practices, with sparkling beads and glittering sequins depicting *Iwa* spirits and Vodou myths, as

### IT REPRESENTS BEAUTY, THE TOUCH OF THE HUMAN HAND, AND LIGHT







Above: *Happyness*, 2022, by Devan Shimoyama. Bottom: *Fey Nan Bwa*, 2022, by Myrlande Constant

well as scenes related to Haitian history. Constant's luminescent renditions with their evocative surfaces also speak to the deep-rooted human attraction to shiny things with their promise of majesty and divinity – a quasi-cosmic power. A major retrospective dedicated to the artist is due to open at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, in March 2023.

Another artist who has long dabbled in glitter is the American painter Chris Martin, although his entry point was quite different. "I worked as an art therapist with men and women living with Aids for around 16 years," he says. "While working at a treatment programme in Red Hook Brooklyn in 1992, I ordered a variety of arts and crafts supplies including glitter. Many of the clients loved glitter and used it to great effect in their art.

"As an artist I was initially dismissive of glitter as a 'craft' material and somehow a cheap trick. But it's wild and beautiful, and I soon came around to the whole new sense of light and movement. I began investigating a range of materials such as pom poms,



DETAIL OF UNTITLED #24, 1978-1979, BY HOWARDENA PINDELL

aluminium foil, pillows, plastic jewels, old clothing, leaves, dried bread and collage of all kinds." The paintings were, he says, "fresh, funny, and surprising. Who doesn't love glitter?" Martin – who presented a range of glitter-infused paintings at Timothy Taylor earlier this year – regularly commands up to \$200,000 for his works.

**FOR A NEW GENERATION, GLITTER** – true to its indelible form – isn't going away either. From Mickalene Thomas's bedazzling, sought-after paintings of female figures to the ornate, glitzy tapestries of Ebony G Patterson, it has become a go-to for bleeding-edge emerging artists. Among them is Damali Abrams, a Reiki practitioner and self-styled "glitter priestess"; Theresa Chromati, whose sensual paintings also feature protruding soft silk sculptures and leather; and Devan Shimoyama, known for narrative self-portraits and paintings of figures evoking folklore, myths and personal stories that sell for up to \$85,000.

"I use glitter for a multitude of reasons," says Shimoyama. He gravitated towards

**"GLITTER MAKES PEOPLE FEEL HAPPY AND FREE"**

it "for its reflective quality, the way that it holds a very different presence when viewed in person, commanding attention and dazzling as one observes the surface. I also love that it creates more texture and fantastical elements within a painting. As a craft material, it has a kind of cheapness to it, but there's an effectively faux-glamorous effect when used in the right way. More is often more."

In the hands of artists, shimmering surfaces can become subtle subversions, overturning kitsch associations and hierarchies of taste. But the perennial appeal of glitter, it seems, lies in its transcendental quality, its joyfulness. Amani Lewis, a young artist whose first European solo exhibition opened at LGDR in Paris last month, thinks so: "I loved hearing Brice Marden talk about his colour usage, and how we can only arrive at colour through light. With glitter, both things happen simultaneously."

In Lewis's tableaux, glitchy scenes based on photographs composed with pastel, paint and digital collage, glitter is a way to draw the viewer's eye to important references or metaphors. But it also adds an essential element, one that much contemporary art misses: fun. "Glitter is very much a child-like material. It makes people happy and feel somewhat free," says Lewis. "The late Charles White talked about how the responsibility of the artist is to create work that creates liberation. That's my goal." ■HTSI



LUXURY GOODS

## Big smokes

Is this the ultimate humidor? Nick Foulkes lights up

"Series 1790 Collection Number Two" is a bespoke humidor packed with 61 special-edition Ramón Allones cigars. In effect, it is a greatest hits of rare and sought-after cigars, ranging from the fabled Belicosos of 2005 – a unicorn cigar made for the UK market and now so scarce that just a single example is included here – to the Private Stock 230 that will launch in the UK before the end of the year.

The collection is a snapshot of the past 17 years of special-release Ramón Allones cigars, and it has been assembled and boxed by UK Cuban cigar importer Hunters & Frankau drawing on its "House Reserve" of aged stock (pictured bottom, about £33,000, davidoff london.com). "About 20 years ago we started to set a few boxes aside from the first shipments of new cigars," explains CEO Jemma Freeman. "But we discovered that special editions carry on being of interest to collectors long after launch. These are for the type of collector who has to have everything."

Mixed assortments of special cigars are occasionally put together in Cuba, and special one-off collections are created for the annual charity auction in Havana. However, House Reserve is a UK initiative and Ramón Allones has a long history in Britain. At a preliminary "tasting", it is with no little trepidation that I light up one of the new Private Stock 230 cigars. To my delight, the application of the flame releases a chorus of harmonious flavours and heavenly sensations across my palate: some silky, some creamy, others almost honeyed. Seldom, if ever, has Ramón Allones been so urbane.

This is the second such compilation to be put together from Hunters' House Reserve. The first appeared in 2019: a truly gargantuan humidor containing 170 cigars, 10 each of all the regional editions made for the UK since 2007. And plans are well under way for collection number three, a single humidor unassumingly referred to as Cohiba Collection of the Century. It will probably rank as the ultimate greatest hits compilation. Among the treasures that will be found behind the double doors of this wardrobe-like humidor are boxes of 25 each of the Cohiba Piramides of 2001 (pictured top), the Cohiba Double Coronas of 2003, and the Cohiba Sublimes of 2004: three of the greatest cigars ever made in Cuba this – or for that matter any other – century. The line-up includes genuinely exclusive stuff. Some, like the Cohiba 55 Aniversario of last year, I have never tasted; others, among them the Cohiba Esplendidos Gran Reserva, I have never seen; and I had never even heard of the Cohiba Siglo de Oro.

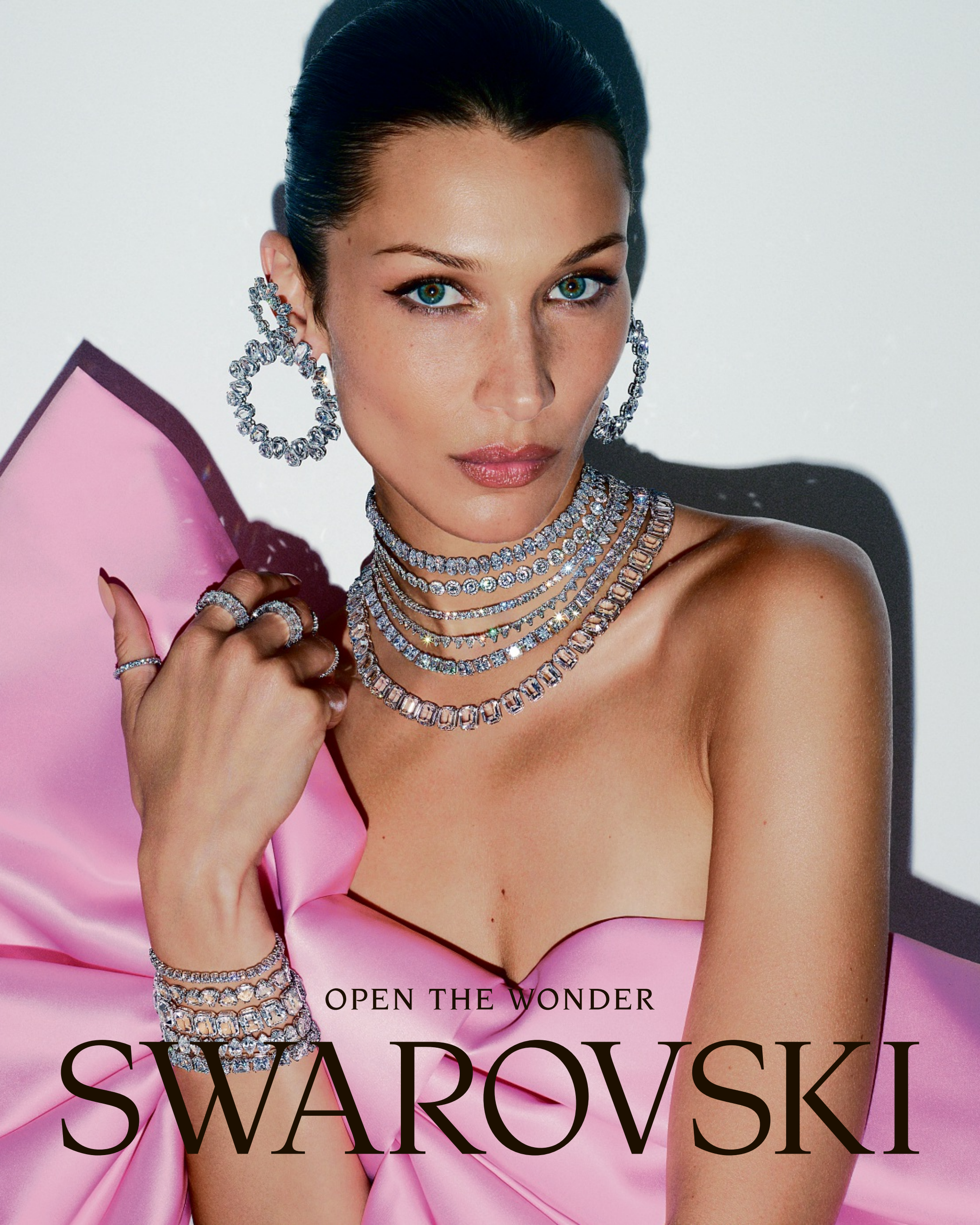
The cost of this, the ultimate greatest hits collection, will be somewhere in the high six figures. But whether the price is utterly unaffordable or merely outrageous, it will make the Ramón Allones collection seem seriously under-priced... especially if they are all as good as the Private Stock 230. ■HTSI



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TREND

# THE MOTHER OF REINVENTION

How did pearls become the most popular jewel of the century, asks *Maria Fitzpatrick*

There's no getting away from pearls. They're on the red carpet. They're on the street. In nightclubs and in day spas (even in beauty, "pearlescent" is the boast du jour). Timothée Chalamet is wearing them. That guy on the underground too. Some years after they gained their 21st-century edge, the most fashion-forward woman you know is still working them – albeit with a new twist.

And just when it seems as if we must, surely, be at the crest of the wave, momentum builds again. On the runways, they're snaking around shoes and in hair, adorning eyebrows, bags and buttons. On Liberty's website they now rank equal to chains in terms of jewellery searches by London customers (in a twist no one saw coming, the two are now considered almost interchangeable). And, despite their omnipresence, when actress Julia Garner arrived at Gucci's SS23 show wearing a 12-string pearl necklace layered right up her neck with a cutaway velvet jumpsuit – her "Hollywood tomboy" – the ensuing commotion proved that pearls, even the faux variety, are still capable of creating a moment. "I must have had about 300 messages when I looked at my phone – all versions of 'Tell me about that necklace!'" laughs Elizabeth Saltzman, Garner's stylist and a self-confessed "pearls girl".

Why hasn't the pearl lost its lustre? It's not *all* down to the cosmic powers of Harry Styles's right lobe. London-based Greek designer Melanie Georgacopoulos made them her niche at design school because "their potential seemed so untapped". Her decade-long partnership with Japanese fine jewellers Tasaki, one of the world's biggest producers of Akoya pearls, is widely recognised as a catalyst for pearls' (literally) cutting-edge repositioning, slicing, splicing and dipping them in gold. "Even I am amazed that this wave just keeps growing," she says.

## "GEN-Z HAS LEAPED ON THIS GEM – I DON'T SEE IT WANING"

Georgacopoulos points to Alexander McQueen and Simone Rocha as early instigators. Shoe designer Nicholas Kirkwood popularised them on heels; Brazilian designer-jeweller Ara Vartanian juxtaposed glowing South Sea beauties with ink-black diamonds; and a minimal, cool-girl spin emerged via Sophie Bille Brahe and Delfina Delettrez. All the while, the high-jewellery maisons, from Chaumet to Dior (Victoire de Castellane's spellbinding Tie & Dior collection, with oversize pistachio and South Sea pearls, broke ranks with its bohemian inspiration), shifted the pearl further away from "classic" tropes. Today, pearls are intrinsic to fashion designer Harris Reed's flamboyant "fluid romanticism" and his cult jewellery collection with Missoma, while simultaneously appearing in streetwear. Supreme's 2021 collaboration with Tiffany, including a freshwater pearl necklace, sold out in seconds.

"Generation Z has leapt on this versatile gem that is flattering to everyone, and easy

to customise to any look and personality – I don't see them letting it go," says fine jewellery expert Josephine Odet, a curator and adviser to vintage jewellery platform Omnèque, who has two decades' experience working with auction houses, jewellers and designers, and sourcing for private clients. She believes we could be witnessing the "bedding in" of the gem for our times. "There are so many touch points: sustainability, accessibility [there are degrees of preciousness], the fact that you can rework cultured pearl pieces quite easily and inexpensively... Meanwhile, the market for natural pearls hasn't cooled at all. I just don't see it waning."

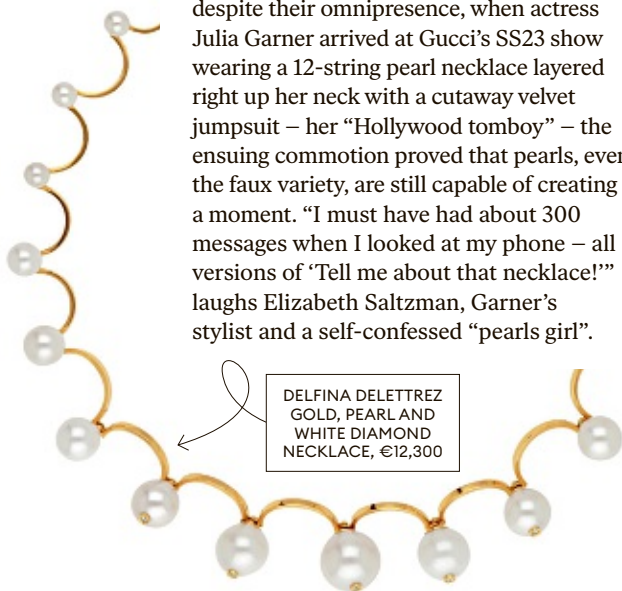
**THE ALL-OUT EMBRACE** as "a gem for everyone" is in itself a long overdue correction. Pearls were worn by 14th- and 15th-century male royals and nobles and the maharajahs as symbols of power. At the turn of the 20th century, they were "feminised": the writer George Frederick Kunz declared that the diamond was the king of gems and the pearl was the queen, and it fuelled the symbolism of modesty and purity. Odet cites Honolulu-born Jason Momoa, who wears a pearl like an amulet on a leather necklace and sometimes sautoir-length strands. "In many cultures men have always worn pearls every day, but people with that big profile have pushed it back to the surface of popular consciousness."

Where men once wore pearls in an elevated way on lapel pins or the odd single earring, it's now common to see them wearing a string of them as part of

Above, clockwise from top far left: Giambattista Valli. Julia Garner. King Combs. Marquise Vilson. Bella Hadid for Vivienne Westwood SS23. Cruz Beckham. Harry Styles. Lewis Hamilton. Shawn Mendes. Jason Momoa. Tilda Swinton



TIFFANY & CO gold and freshwater-pearl HardWear Triple Drop Link earrings, £2,225



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DIOR JOAILLERIE Tie & Dior gold, cultured pearl, platinum, ruby, diamond, tourmaline, garnet and sapphire earrings, POA







Above: OMNÈQUE natural pearl and diamond necklace, POA. Left, from top: SOPHIE BILLE BRAHE gold and freshwater-pearl Palais de Nuit single earring, £1,200. ARA VARTANIAN gold, black diamond and South Sea pearl earrings, £6,900

GIVENCHY PEARL AND CRYSTAL 4G NECKLACE, €1,590

Right: ANISSA KERMICHE gold-plated silver and pearl Grab Them By The Balls earring, £165. Below: SONIA CHEADLE bespoke rose-gold, diamond and dark-grey Tahitian pearl Spinning I ring, from £6,500

TASAKI GOLD AND FRESHWATER-PEARL WEDGE BRACELET, £5,010

a laidback look – led by the example of Styles and Pharrell Williams. “Men can see that pearls look good whether you’re young or older,” says Saltzman. “If you look at Giambattista Valli, who’s always worn a pearl necklace every day – it’s cool, it doesn’t look like he’s working too hard, it just looks like he knows himself.”

It helps that pearls, while a jewel-like accent, are naturally understated. Their association with mourning came from Queen Victoria, who eschewed coloured gems after Prince Albert’s death, so their prevalence could be read as a hard pivot away from bling. But the pearl is also a perfect emblem for individuality – and the search for meaning. “If you slice through a pearl, each one is as unique as a

**“EACH PEARL IS AS UNIQUE AS A FINGERPRINT INSIDE”**

fingerprint inside,” explains Georgacopoulos. What’s more, the colours can be quite subjective – Tahitian and South Sea pearls, for instance, may have a peacock tinge, or greyish, or blue – so picking a pearl represents a deeply personal choice.

But it’s pearls’ connection to nature that makes them such a power player for the future. “The natural ones were overfarmed, and lessons were learned,” says Odet. “Now clients think of cultured pearls as a feelgood purchase because the farms, relatively speaking, are low-impact; and because the oyster nuclei are re-grafted, it’s not plundering nature.”

**“TO HAVE GOOD-QUALITY** pearls you have to have a clean, stable marine environment,” adds Georgacopoulos, explaining that cultured pearls stay in the water for up to 18 months. “You’re not drilling and extracting from the earth or pumping in chemicals.” The by-product mother-of-pearl, which is increasingly being explored by Bibi van der Velden and Garrard, among others, also looks likely to gain in desirability.

In the new M/G Tasaki Wedge collection, the pearls are quartered, explains Georgacopoulos. “For so long, rough diamonds have been taken from the earth, faceted and polished, and yet there’s this idea that pearls should be kept intact and unadulterated. Doing otherwise is still controversial, but it’ll be interesting to see if that changes.”

A sense of adventure is coming, though. It’s in Sonia Cheadle’s spinning faceted Tahitian pearl ring and Sophie Keegan’s kinetic Pearl Bobble ring; in the sassy designs by Pearl Octopussy and Completedworks; and in Anissa Kermiche’s Grab Them By The Balls single earring. Yoko London has a convertible choker with drop pearls that can be removed, and is planning its first dedicated men’s collection. Meanwhile, black pearls, often inky-blue and excellent for evening, are on the make. One thing’s for certain: the jewels of the sea are not going back into their shells. ■HTSI

Right: NIGEL O’REILLY rose-gold, freshwater-pink-pearl and white-, pink and blue-diamond De Ville ring, POA



JEWELLERY

# CELTIC CHARMS

Meet the Mayo jeweller who has conquered Rodeo Drive. By *Maria Fitzpatrick*

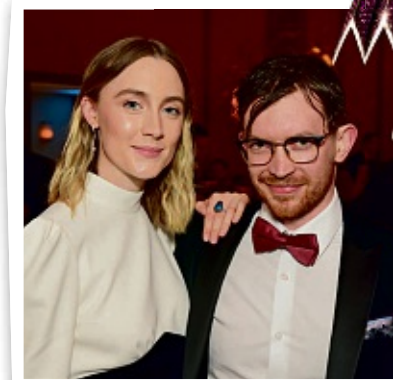
**T**here’s something otherworldly about Nigel O’Reilly’s jewellery, yet its story, which begins in the west of Ireland, is irresistibly down-to-earth. Boy meets girl in a small Galway nightclub. The farmer’s son, with severe dyslexia, who earns his living creating injection moulds for vascular surgery, sets out to impress the art-school student by fashioning a ring from medical-grade steel – and wins her heart.

It was an early glimpse of the daring and ingenuity that has come to define O’Reilly’s art jewels, the subject of a solo exhibition at Sotheby’s LA from 30 November. His highly crafted pieces – currently worn by Saoirse Ronan, Julianne Moore, Maya Hawke and Grace Kelly’s granddaughter – are complex and intellectual yet joyfully rebellious.

That’s what put him in the sights of Frank Everett, senior vice president of Sotheby’s New York, when they met five years ago. Soon afterwards, he earmarked two rings for the house’s Important Jewels sale in 2020 – the first Irish jewellery designer ever to feature. “Sometimes you think everything in jewellery must have been done, but then something really fresh comes along,” Everett says. “Nigel’s a big thinker but there’s a bit of a rocker undertone, and I was instantly taken with him.”

The 40-year-old designer, who is often found listening to Bowie at

Below: Nigel O’Reilly with Saoirse Ronan. Right: white-gold, black-rhodium-plated, diamond, ruby and pink- and orange-sapphire Stardust earrings, \$57,000



the bench, cites Alexander McQueen and Philip Treacy as influences. He trained under the late master goldsmiths Rudolf Heltzel and Erwin Springbrunn, considered one of the finest gem

cutters in Europe. He then worked for Van Cleef, Stephen Webster, Boodles, Garrard and Fabergé, before returning to Ireland. His – mainly bespoke – business launched in his home town of Castlebar in County Mayo in 2009, with the support of Tracy Sweeney, now his wife and an award-winning artist, and two brothers (one of whom he taught gem-setting himself, the other an engineer) who work in his atelier.

**“I LIKE THE FEELING OF ‘IT SHOULDN’T WORK BUT IT DOES”**

Entirely self-funded – “we could only afford to buy one stone at a time and sell it to fund the next one” – he has pushed himself in every sense.

“There’s a lot of ‘you have to do this or that’ in fine jewellery, and one of my guiding aims is to constantly challenge that,” says the father of two. “I like the feeling of ‘it shouldn’t work but it does’; each piece should be electrifying.”

An unusual approach to pavé work, unexpected colour combinations, and his original, sculptural forms are providing thrills for a growing audience of fine jewel collectors. “Nigel has these shapes and forms grounded in medieval jewellery, yet nothing’s too referential – or reverential,” Everett reflects.

The exhibition in Sotheby’s Beverly Hills space showcases a 29-piece capsule collection comprising rings (including the signature De Ville ring with a rotating faceted pink pearl) along with large pendants, a cuff, cufflinks and his eye-popping earrings.

“Earrings are the ultimate in design,” he says. “I love making them big and complicated, but they have to be light – there are a lot of mechanics involved.” His current escapades marry whisper-light titanium bodies with gold through the ear. “I want to keep the viewer, and the wearer, guessing,” he says.

As his jewellery takes him down paths he never imagined, his late mentor Springbrunn – “a Gandalf-like presence” whose stones O’Reilly credits with much of his work’s impact – is ever present. No doubt his own wizardry would have made him proud. ■HTSI





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*Domaine Clarence Dillon*



WATCHES

# IN THE SMALL HOURS

What could be more elegant than a miniaturised timepiece? By *Vivienne Becker*

First popularised in the 1920s and '30s, miniature mechanical watches have long made a subtle but scintillating addition to ensembles. But over the decades they have become far rarer as a category, since making them requires such a high level of skill.

Tiny dials need tiny mechanisms. The smallest calibre in the world remains Jaeger-LeCoultre's classic 101, which was first created in 1929. A masterpiece of micro-mechanical engineering, the watch was devised so that the wearer might discreetly check the time, as the minuscule dial was set inside a diamond bracelet. It revolutionised horology, fusing both watch and jewel, and Queen Elizabeth II chose to wear the watch for her coronation. In its latest fourth-generation incarnation, the 101 is found in the new Snowdrop high-jewellery watch with a dial framed in pear-shaped white diamonds forming a

flowerhead from which diamond petals float around the wrist.

Bulgari's diminutive new Piccolissimo calibre is the smallest round movement on the market. The "brain" of the lusciously bejewelled Serpenti Misteriosi secret watches, the dial shelters inside the fanged mouth of the serpent's head.

Part of the appeal of the mini watch lies in the fact that it works so well with bracelet stacks that are all about personalisation and individuality. Beth Hannaway, head of fine watches and jewellery at Harrods, has seen the shift towards smaller watches over the past few years. She thinks a

small watch both celebrates femininity and signals "a beautifully democratic point of view that any size goes".

Van Cleef & Arpels' first Perlée watch, launched this year, is small, sweet and edged with the gold bobbly beads that are the Perlée signature. Hermès, too, has been offering its petite, perfectly formed Faubourg since 2014. A modern take on a pure round dial, it measures only 15.5mm in diameter, can be worn with a gold or leather strap, and comes in rose, white and yellow gold. Philippe Delhotal, artistic director of Hermès Horloger, says: "At Hermès, we always believed in small watches. We don't try to follow trends, we follow our own path. We were delighted to reinvent the Faubourg in 2021 with the Polka line."

CHOPARD'S HAPPY DIAMONDS comes in a mini version, with a smooth rose-gold case and mother-of-pearl dial. Similarly, Chaumet's sweet Hortensia Eden watches go effortlessly from day to night, with tiny diamond hydrangea blossoms perched on the side of the diamond-rimmed dial.

La Mini D de Dior was conceived by Victoire de Castellane in 2009 as a more jewel-like, cocktail version of her original D de Dior. Perfectly proportioned and always thrillingly embellished, the latest model, aptly named Cocotte, has a diamond-smothered snow-set dial in a frame of rubies and pink or blue sapphires. Graff's diamond Tilda's Bow watch also has a generous stream of diamonds and is available on a black satin strap or an all-diamond bracelet, while Harry Winston's Mini-twist jewellery watch trails marquise-diamond leaves – a Winston signature – around a delicate trellis-band bracelet.



CHANEL gold Première Edition Originale, £4,850



BULGARI ROSE-GOLD SERPENTI MISTERIOSI, POA

## "WE DON'T FOLLOW TRENDS, WE FOLLOW OUR OWN PATH"

It is a theme that pays homage to the late Ambaji Shinde, one of Harry Winston's celebrated designers, who epitomised the glamour of the '50s and '60s when a cocktail watch was de rigueur.

Not everyone is going round in circles. Take Gucci's G-Frame, for example, the square or rectangular case with deep bevelled sides, and Cartier's enduring design icon, the Panthère de Cartier, which comes in a delightful mini-model, in rose gold with diamonds. As Pierre Rainero, Cartier's

director of heritage, image and style, explains: "We concentrate on the principal beauty of each object. Our clients decide how they wish to style our creations."

Chanel, too, is making shapes with a series of three, limited-edition watches that shrink the house's classic Première, which mimics the shape of the No 5 perfume bottle. The new 19mm x 15mm styles are set into maximalist designs: a stacked leather and chain cuff, an oversized diamond-set curb chain and a leather and chain bangle hung with medallion charms. A mini-maxi moment in time. ■HTSI



CHAUMET white-gold and diamond Torsade de Chaumet, POA

VAN CLEEF & ARPELS gold and guilloché onyx Perlée, £7,800

HERMÈS rose-gold and diamond Faubourg Polka, £17,060

GRAFF white-gold and diamond Tilda's Bow, £60,000

GUCCI yellow-gold mesh bracelet G-Frame, £990

DIOR white-gold, sapphire and diamond La D de Dior Mini Cocotte, POA

JAEGER-LECOULTRE white-gold and diamond 101 Snowdrop, £413,000

CARTIER rose-gold and diamond Panthère de Cartier, £67,500

HARRY WINSTON white-gold and diamond Mini Twist, POA

CHOPARD rose-gold Happy Diamonds Icons, £8,130

PHOTOGRAPH: EASTIMAGE



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# Boogie NIGHTS

As the iconic skating venue Flipper's is reborn, *Rosanna Dodds* charts the rise (and falls) of the roller disco

**L**ast night I went to the roller rink again. It was Saturday evening and the lights were neon, the music was disco and the conga line was 12 people deep. Dinner was a hotdog soused in American mustard; drinks were Shirley Temples and malted shakes. The atmosphere was pure joy.

I am not alone in my obsession. Over the past 12 months, temporary rinks have opened all over the world: from a Nile Rodgers-led disco in Central Park to an LGBTQ+ celebration at Brixton Village Market and Swizz Beatz's party in AlUla, Saudi Arabia. The latest,

Flipper's Roller Boogie Palace, has this month arrived in London for good, offering UK skaters a new venue to practise, swap skills and perform.

Flipper's is modelled on the Hollywood sensation that spun onto Santa Monica Boulevard in the late 1970s. It was where Laura Dern celebrated her 12th birthday, where Rodgers would skate in off the street and Prince immortalised his *Dirty Mind* Tour. It had a 20,000-watt stereo system, murals by John Kosh and a lagoon-like polyurethane floor. Cher rolled through while Patrick Swayze tried out his beginner's skills. It was, as *Charlie's Angels* actress Jaelyn Smith remembers, "Studio 54 on wheels".

The revamp is being led by former model Liberty Ross, daughter of original owner Ian "Flipper" Ross, and Kevin Wall. Ross was just three when the first venue closed in 1981, but the years since have uncovered countless tales from the dancefloor. "Those are the people who inspired this journey," says Ross, who has also opened a seasonal rink at New York's Rockefeller Center. Similar nostalgia drives American musician Usher, a partner in the project. "Skating was the first chance I had to hold hands with a girl," he says. "That was a major moment for me."

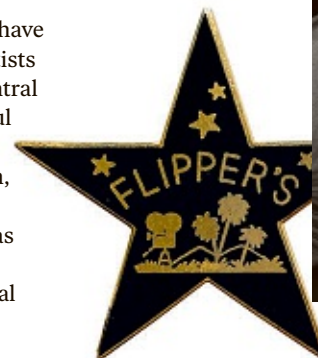
Disco made roller rinks famous, but the new rinks have rolled with the times. Ross has pegged her vision to artists such as Meek Mill, Mary J Blige and British rapper Central Cee. Tottenham venue Roller Nation hosts weekly "Soul Skate" sessions. "Roller disco is the original activity night out," says David French, director of Roller Nation, where visits have gone up by a third in the past year.

Ross is bent on making Flipper's "as accessible to as many people as possible", she says. "Everything about Flipper's is about family." Working closely with the local



Above: the original Flipper's Roller Boogie Palace in its heyday. Left: Liberty Ross (centre), founder of the revamped Flipper's

Right: Flipper's founder Ian Ross with his daughters Holly and Liberty. Below: a Flipper's pin badge. Far left: opening night at the new Flipper's in New York



PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID ALLEN, JIM FRANK, STEPHANIE HOGUE





Above: Usher (centre) at Flipper's in New York. Above right: roller skaters in Brixton village this year. Below: teens at the original Flipper's in New York. Bottom right: the opening of Flipper's Roller Boogie Palace



“SKATING HAS THIS ELECTRIC ENERGY WHERE YOU FEEL LIKE YOU’RE ALL FEEDING OFF EACH OTHER”

skate community, the venue has been designed to accommodate a 5,038sq ft rink, a ground-floor “boogie” lounge and a skate pro shop. “A safe space and controlled environment is what we needed,” says Kai Phillip, Flipper’s rink operations manager and a skater since 2010. Roller Nation’s French has catered to similar demand by making Monday night a chance for “more proficient” skaters to enjoy the space: skate hire is closed, and visitors can select their own music.

Skating saw huge interest in 2020 – but as Phillip points out, the sport was popular long before lockdown. Around the same time that the original Flipper’s was closing – the constant shenanigans made it a “nuisance to the city” – rinks were becoming incubators for America’s emerging hip-hop artists. Shunned from traditional venues, these musicians turned neighbourhood skating spots into legendary concert arenas: World on Wheels had LA Dream Team; Queen Latifah made her West Coast debut at Skateland. By day the rinks became vital centres for their local black communities, offering generations of families a space to hit the floor.

Today these venues are under threat, with hundreds of closures over the past 20 years. Many have introduced rules – no rap, no sliding (a popular LA skate style) – that have been read as an effort to alienate African-American skaters. For others the issue is financial: World on Wheels closed after a new developer declared a rent increase of up to 300 per cent. “Any roller disco that goes anywhere has to cut some sort of deal,” says Shayna Meikle, founder of new Long Beach rink Pigeon’s, who curbs her landlord’s fees by giving away “a large percentage” of the venue’s profits.

But the beat goes on – as seen in venues such as Flipper’s, Roller Nation, Pigeon’s and the various skate parties across the US (check out ShoDown N Seatown, Sk8-A-Thon and Rolling For A Cause). “The beauty of skating is that it unites everybody together,” says Ross, who cites the 2018 documentary *United Skates*, an ode to America’s rink culture, as one of the inspirations for this relaunch. Adds Meikle, who is determined to find a permanent venue in the next five years: “[Skating] has this electric energy where you feel like you’re all feeding off each other. You’re able to move in ways you couldn’t do by yourself – and you’re moving that way because of the flow.”

Ask any skater why the roller disco never dies and they’ll probably start by talking about the feel of it. “The freedom, the fitness and the happiness,” says Phillip. Out on the rink you can be anything: a bird, a dancer, a professional skater. Or just another guest at one of Flipper’s illustrious parties. ■HTSI

The Flipper’s playlist

Power (Remember Who You Are)  
SPINALL, Summer Walker and DJ Snake feat. Ayanna



Kill Dem  
Jamie xx

Move Bitch  
Ludacris

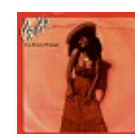
Blow the Whistle  
Too Short

Incredible  
M-Beat feat. General Levy



Le Freak  
Chic

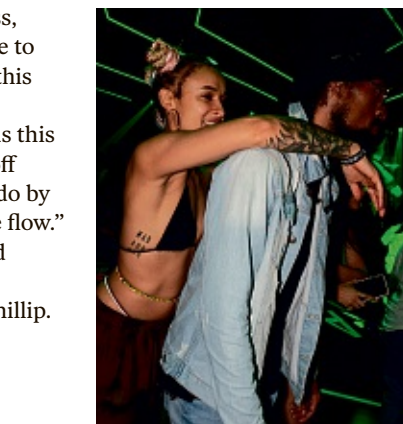
On The Radio  
Donna Summer



I’m Every Woman  
Chaka Khan

Canon in D Major  
Pachelbel

THIS WAS ALWAYS THE LAST SONG PLAYED AT THE ORIGINAL FLIPPER’S



PHOTOGRAPHS: JAMES KELLY, JIM FRANK, MARSHALL LAWRENCE, NEIL RASMUS AND ANGELA PHAM



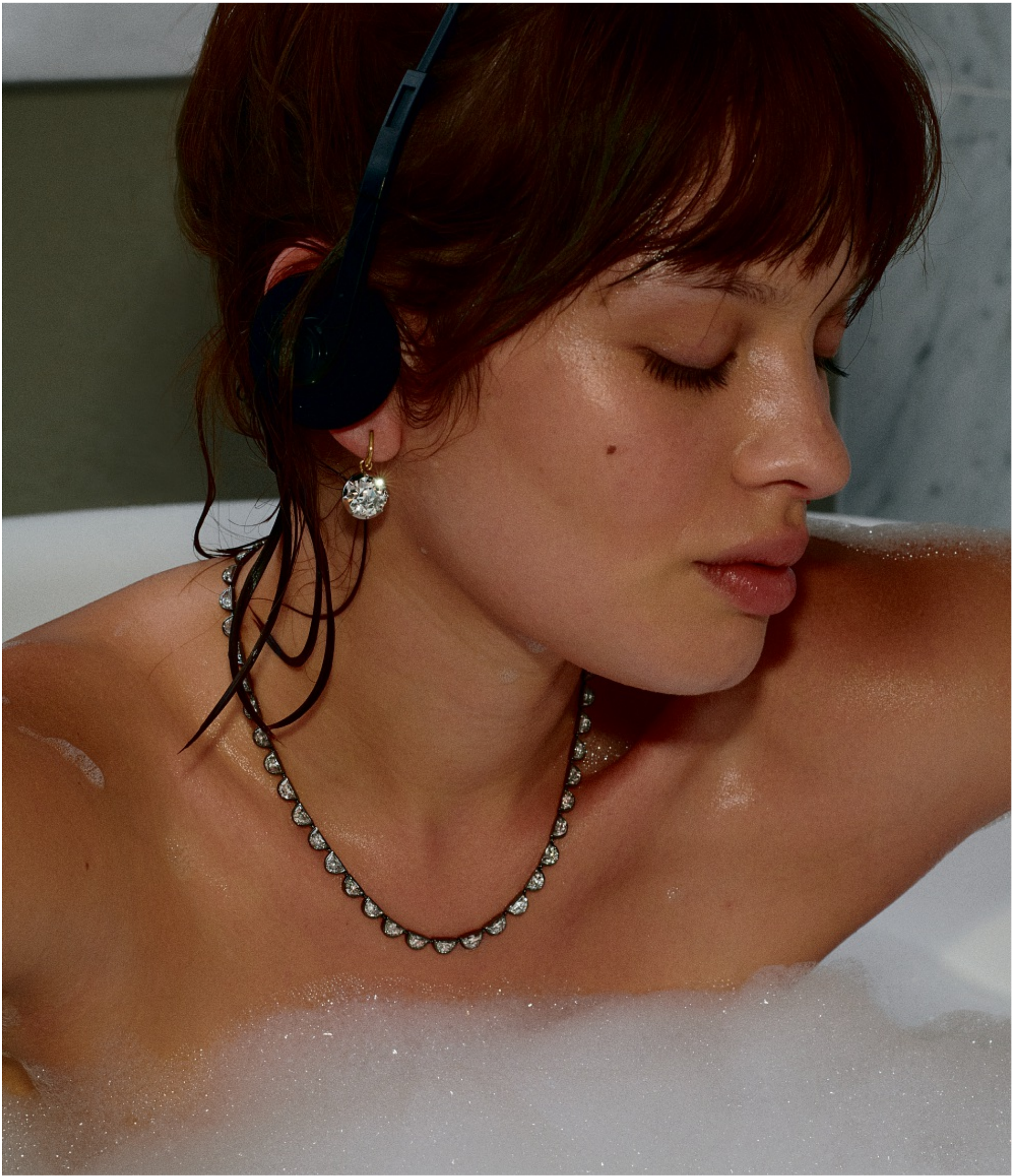
A man with dark hair and a light beard is the central figure. He is wearing a light grey, long-sleeved polo sweater over a light blue button-down shirt. He is standing in a classical building with stone columns and arches. The lighting is warm and directional, coming from the side, creating soft shadows. The overall mood is sophisticated and classic.

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## “CULTURE is a BOND”

For Basma Al Sulaiman and gallerist Pearl Lam, a feisty friendship is fuel for an extraordinary art collection.

By Victoria Woodcock

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSHUA TARN

Top: Pearl Lam and Basma Al Sulaiman at the latter's London home. On the wall behind them is *Fresh and Fading Memories* by Ghanaian artist El Anatsui. Below: *Dinosaur* by Sui Jianguo



**W**e met because Basma and one of my friends shared a divorce lawyer!” Gallerist Pearl Lam and her friend Basma Al Sulaiman laugh heartily as they sit in Al Sulaiman’s impressively appointed, art-filled London home. Lam recalls their first encounter around 2004 as they sip tea: “The lawyer introduced my friend to Basma and said, ‘If you collect Chinese art, you must meet Pearl.’”

With her gravity-defying purple bob – paired when we meet with a lemon-yellow jumper – Lam has been involved in the Chinese art world for nearly 30 years. In 1993, she began collecting Chinese art; in 2005, she opened her first physical space in Shanghai and since 2012 has had a second Pearl Lam Galleries space in her hometown of Hong Kong, representing homegrown and international artists from pioneering Chinese abstract painter Zhu Jinshi to British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare.

Saudi Arabia-born Al Sulaiman, meanwhile, began collecting contemporary art in the 1990s. Her first purchase was a Hockney, and today she owns more than 800 works ranging from high-profile international artists such as Ai Weiwei, Tracey Emin and Andy Warhol to Saudi artists. In 2000 she moved to London and completed a diploma in modern and contemporary art from Christie’s Education. It was then that she became interested in Chinese art. “A Saudi collecting Chinese art!” explodes Lam. “You know? It was so strange to

me. And she was buying political pop art.” She shakes her head. “I thought, ‘Why?!’”

“Because it was different from what I’d been seeing; it was fresh, it was human, it was real,” says Al Sulaiman, who has never worked with an art adviser and was introduced to Chinese art through a friend. “He called me and said, ‘Basma, there’s this amazing artist, I love his work but it’s too big for my house, would you be interested to see it?’” The artist was Beijing-based Yue Minjun, now famous for his “Cynical Realist” oil paintings depicting himself laughing, his face frozen in a demonic grin. Al Sulaiman bought the painting *Face on the Land* in 2003 for £40,000. In 2007, when Sotheby’s London auctioned Yue’s seminal 1995 work inspired by the Tiananmen Square massacre, *Execution*, it sold for a record-breaking £2.9m – the highest price for a contemporary Chinese artwork at the time.

### “A SAUDI COLLECTING POLITICAL POP ART? WHY?!”

“People started to buy contemporary Chinese art in 1995,” explains Lam. “In the early 2000s – when Basma was there – it was just a very interesting, exciting time. There was this vibrant art scene, the government had not endorsed it, and there were only a handful of Chinese collectors – so tourists were going there to buy art as a souvenir, because the prices were low. After about 2006, though, it went crazy.” Before then, Al Sulaiman would travel to China regularly, discovering artists while visiting her daughter, who was





working in Shanghai. But she met Lam for the first time at a dinner in London. The two clicked straight away – but more because of what they didn't agree on than what they did, says Lam. "Basma loves political pop; I don't. I consider political pop to be the western definition of Chinese contemporary art. And Basma likes figurative art; I don't. But when you're talking about art, it's much better to have two different opinions," she says.

The first piece Al Sulaiman bought from Lam was by Shao Fan – "a deconstructed Chinese chair, put together as a sculpture. And eventually, she bought Chinese abstracts," says Lam, referencing two works in Al Sulaiman's home by Beijing-based Zhu Jinshi, a pioneer of Chinese abstract painting who cakes his canvases in heavy, impasto layers. "He uses a shovel to throw on the paint," says Al Sulaiman, standing in front of a large-scale triptych that she bought in 2015. "It's so beautiful. When you think about it as a landscape, you can see it, you can feel it."

In fact, abstraction is well represented in her home, and two minimalist, multi-frame works command the living space: the first, consisting of nine pink Plexiglas squares, is by French conceptualist Daniel Buren (*Framed Colours, 9 Magenta Elements*, 2007), and the other is a series of bi-colour paintings (*Hommage à Le Corbusier*, 2000) by German modernist Günther Förg. At the other end of the room is a huge work by Ghanaian artist El Anatsui, its undulating, nearly 5m-high form constructed from bottle tops pieced together with copper wire. "I bought it in 2012, but only when I moved in here in May was I able to see it," she says. "It's one of the reasons I bought this place: I needed big walls." The art is all displayed, slightly incongruously, alongside 18th-century antique furniture – from France, Italy and England – and French Aubusson tapestries. "Pearl doesn't like my carpets," Al Sulaiman smiles.

The other place where Al Sulaiman's collection lives is online. In 2011, she launched Basmoca, a virtual museum that can be walked around via an avatar. "I wanted eagerly to share the collection but the concept of building a physical space back home in Saudi Arabia was a bit difficult at that time," she recalls. Instead, she explored the idea of creating a space within the online multimedia platform Second Life, but eventually built her own virtual world.

"Basically, Basma was doing metaverse before anyone else was doing metaverse," says Lam. "But it was like gibberish to people," adds Al Sulaiman. "Nobody understood it at that time, it was way too early. Now, of course, everybody is doing it." Earlier this year, she showed a portion of her Saudi art collection in a physical space – inside Maraya, a striking, mirrored building in Saudi Arabia's historic desert canyon site Al-'Ula.

Al Sulaiman has also dipped her toe in NFTs. She points to a screen on the wall. "It resembles Monet's *Water Lilies*," she says of the digital work by Italian artist Davide Quayola, which plays on a loop and is surrounded by a wall of portraits – most are "classical", but there is one with

Above: *Little Red Book Series* – 192 ceramic pieces by Xu Yihui. Right: the duo in front of *Hamdi & Hamada*, 2009, by Adel El Siwi. Below: tea and cake served on Herend porcelain



a cat's head. "It's supposed to be Mao," she says of the painting by Shanghai-born artist Qiu Jie.

"It's unusual for traditional art collectors to buy NFTs because they have no museum credentials," suggests Lam, adding the cryptocurrency crash earlier this year has led to a weaker market for NFTs, but that they still have a role to play for a younger generation of artists and collectors. "There are young artists selling NFTs for \$50 or \$100. This is democratised art. And if it's not NFT, another mode of technology will emerge."

One of the artists Lam represents is London-based Philip Colbert, a self-titled "pioneer of the metaverse" who this year launched NFT project *The Lobstars*. And an artist Lam is keen to introduce to Al Sulaiman is Mr Doodle, aka British artist Sam Cox, who recently covered his entire Kent home in his graphic, graffiti-like imagery; the stop-motion video of the process has been watched nearly 2mn times on YouTube. "I did check him out after you told me," says Al Sulaiman to her friend. "It's very different. Interesting..."

"I know some of these things are not your aesthetic," says Lam, "but I think it's interesting because this is the

## "BASMA WAS DOING THE METAVERSE BEFORE ANYONE"

new generation of artists. Our minds should be very open – my gallery mission is about cultural exchange."

Both women describe each other as "open-minded", and they often travel together, visiting art fairs and discovering new artists. A few years ago they went to Japan – to Tokyo

and the island of Naoshima – with friends. Earlier this year they took a trip to Saudi Arabia – a first for Lam. They've also recently uncovered an artist they're equally passionate about: Maha Malluh. "Her work is all about found objects, about reminiscing and history," says Al Sulaiman, walking over to a sculpture constructed from old enamelled cooking pots. Another artist they agree on is Babajide Olatunji, who they came across at the Art Dubai fair, and whose work Lam bought on the spot – a charcoal and pastel portrait that is hyperrealistic yet depicts an imagined sitter. Lam will showcase the Nigerian artist at her Shanghai space next year, while another of his drawings has made it on to Al Sulaiman's walls (via Sotheby's, for £10,000).

Other works in Al Sulaiman's collection include figurative paintings by Egyptian artist Adel El Siwi (*Hamdi & Hamada*, 2009) and Norfolk-based Jonathan Wateridge. But just as Lam considers herself a conduit for a diverse cross-section of artists in China, Al Sulaiman's ultimate dream is to bring her eclectic collection to a permanent space in Saudi Arabia, where in 2014 she became the first woman to receive an award from the government for her contributions to the country's art and cultural spheres. "Culture is a bond," she concludes. "It bonds people in a special language that doesn't need a translation." ■HTSI





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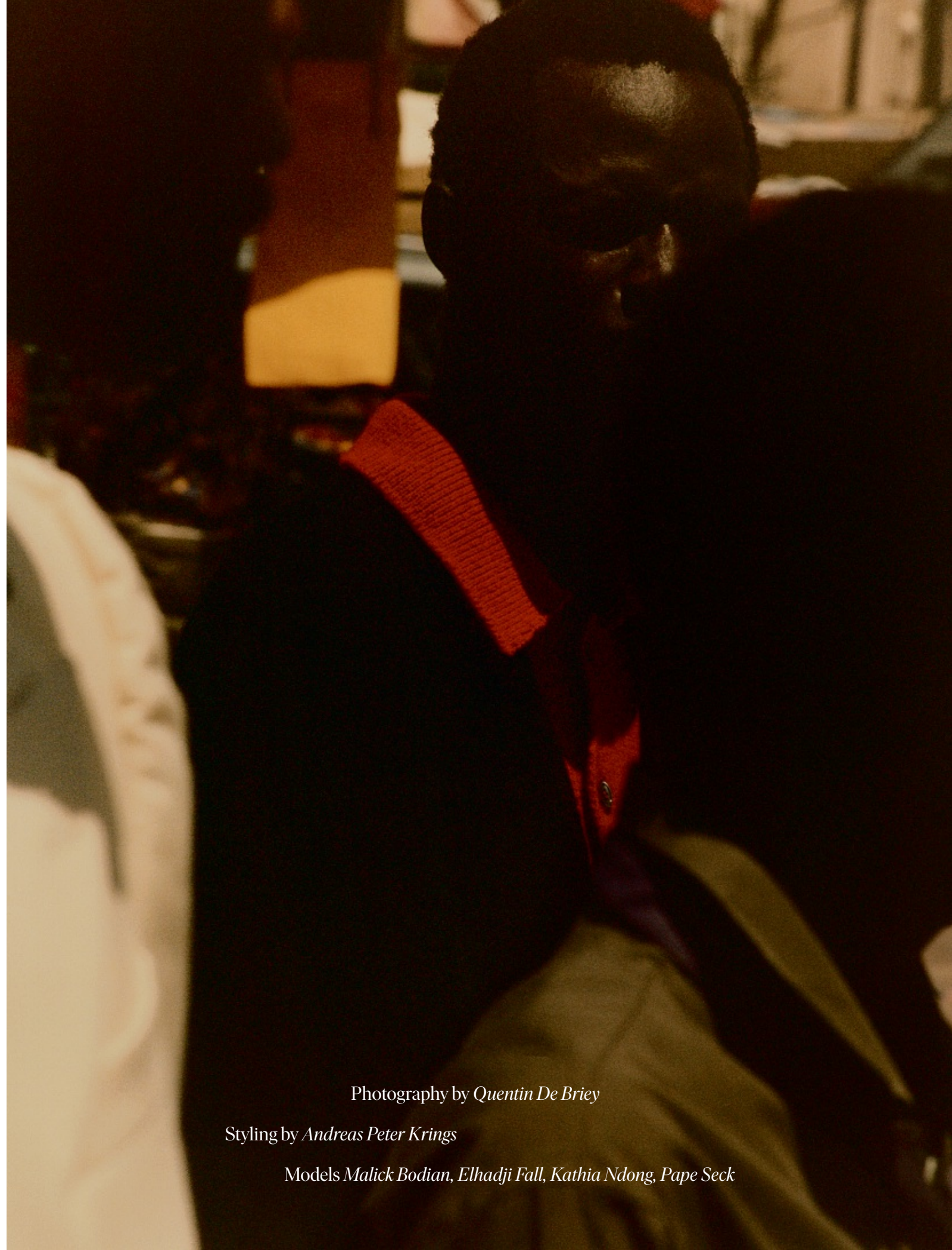
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Left: Malick wears STEFAN COOKE wool mock-neck cardigan, £659

Opposite page: Malick wears BOTTEGA VENETA wool blazer, £1,790, wool sweater, £870, and leather trousers, £3,930. CHURCH'S leather grecian slippers, £520. ANN DEMEULEMEESTER wool velour hat, €450

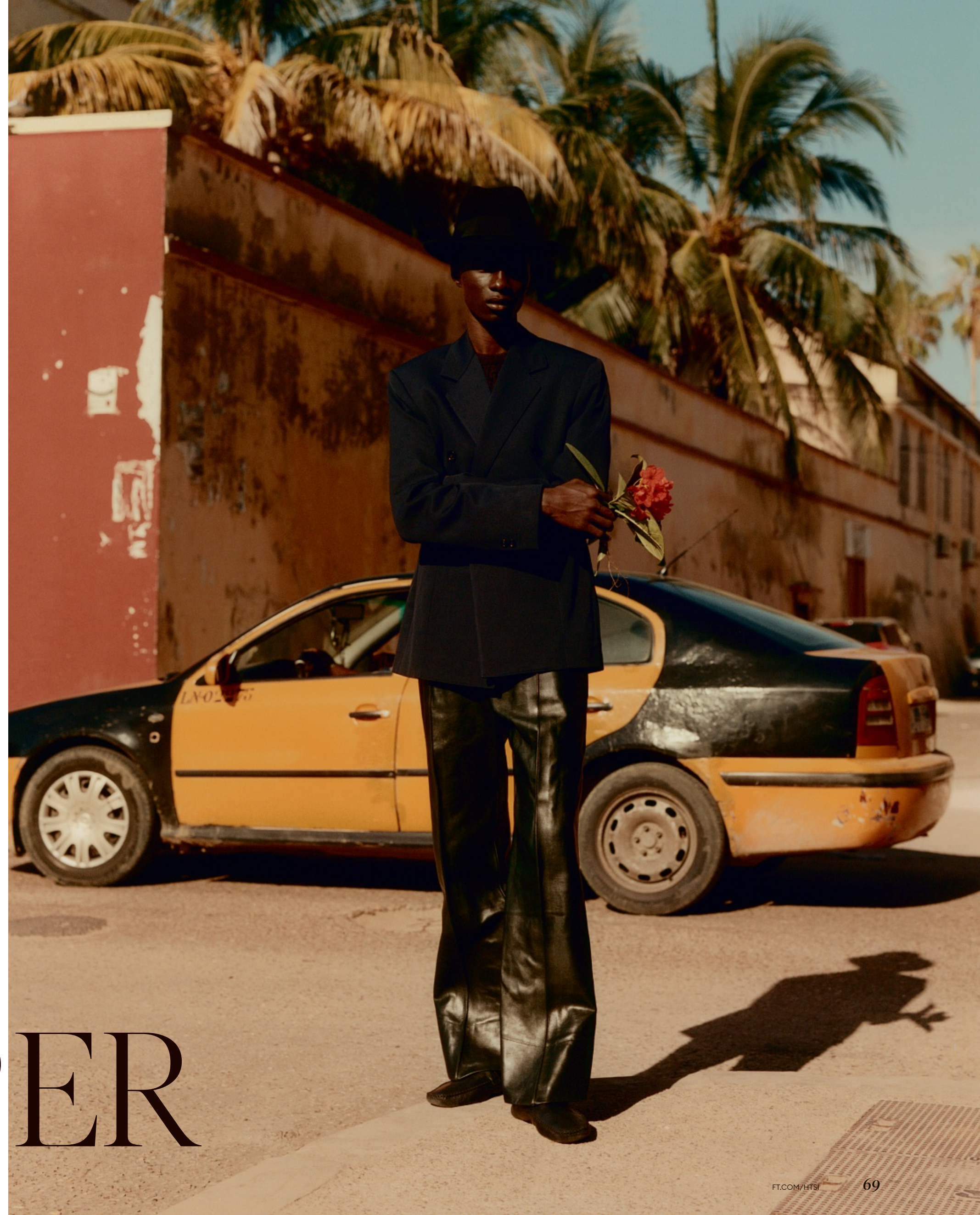
Photography by *Quentin De Brie*

Styling by *Andreas Peter Krings*

Models *Malick Bodian, Elhadji Fall, Kathia Ndong, Pape Seck*

The eclectic spirit of Senegal summons an easy elegance

# DAKAR DAPPER





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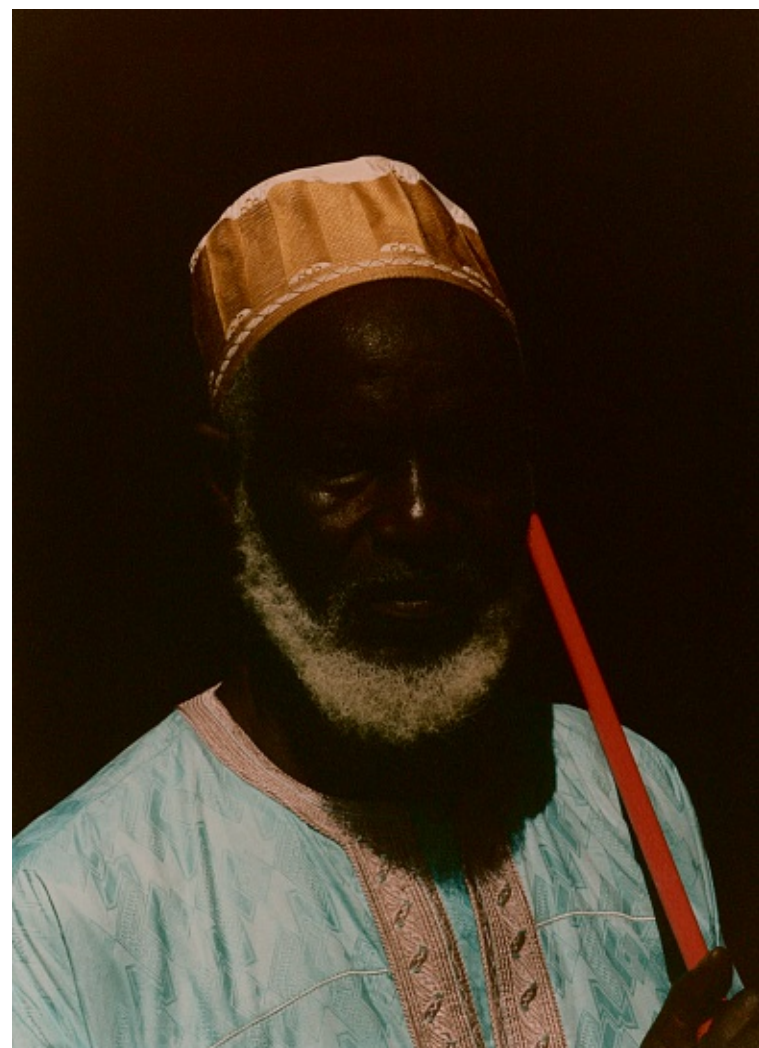


Right: Malick wears META CAMPANIA COLLECTIVE wool twill jacket, €1,200. ZEGNA wool rollneck sweater, €890, and wool gabardine trousers, €790









Above left: Malick wears  
CANALI wool-cashmere suit  
jacket and trousers, £2,450. THE  
ROW cotton poplin shirt, £910





Malick wears EMPORIO ARMANI wool waistcoat, £330. BRIONI cashmere and silk rollneck sweater, £840. ACNE STUDIOS wool twill trousers, POA. CHURCH'S leather-grecian slippers, £520. MIU MIU wool socks, €290









This page and opposite page: Malick wears LOUIS VUITTON silk shirt, £1,500, and cotton wide-leg trousers, £890. CHURCH'S leather grecian slippers, £520. Vintage tie, stylist's own



Malick wears DIOR wool  
twill Bar coat, £3,700.  
META CAMPANIA  
COLLECTIVE felted  
cashmere T-shirt, €1,100.  
LEMAIRE cotton canvas  
trousers, £495





Kathia (on left) wears VIVIENNE WESTWOOD recycled-cotton gabardine herringbone trench, £1,060. LACOSTE cotton polo shirt (seen on opposite page), €100. MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION flannel trousers, £730. THE ROW leather Derby shoes, £1,130. ANN DEMEULEMEESTER wool velour hat, €450. Pape wears LEMAIRE wool coat, POA. LACOSTE cotton polo, €100. FERRAGAMO Scottish striped cloth trousers, £960. TOD'S suede shoes, £450. ANN DEMEULEMEESTER wool velour hat, €450





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WEMS (30)	350
WEMS (40)	400
PIZZA PALAIS (M)	
POULET CHICKEN	





Above: Pope wears  
LACOSTE cotton polo shirt,  
€100. Vintage hat, stylist's own





Left: Pape wears HERMÈS cashmere and silk rollneck sweater, £2,650, and leather trousers, £6,500. MIU MIU leather belt, €430. Elhadji wears MAISON MARGIELA wool jumper, €670, and linen double-breasted blazer, €1,450. PRADA cotton trousers, from £620





Malick wears META CAMPANIA COLLECTIVE felted cashmere T-shirt, €1,100. ZEGNA wool gabardine trousers, €790. CHURCH'S leather grecian slippers, £520. MIU MIU wool socks, €290. ACNE STUDIOS wool scarf, €130

Models, Malick Bodian at Success, Elhadji Fall and Kathia Ndong at Amy, and Pape Seck at RN Models. Casting, Anna Pkhakadze at Julia Lange Casting. Photographer's assistant, Achraf Issami. Stylist's assistant, Eyassene Diagne. Production, Gina Amama at Generation X. Special thanks to Oumou Souloy and Hotel de La Poste, Saint Louis. The Saint Louis Jazz Festival will celebrate its 31st year in June 2023



## Aleks Cvetkovic studies the new codes of eveningwear

**I**n October 2019, I was invited to a boat party on the River Thames. The dress code specified “eveningwear”. As a fashion peacock, I interpreted this as an opportunity to get creative: my chosen outfit was a navy silk jacquard jacket, open-collar midnight-blue linen shirt and mohair trousers, set off with navy suede slippers. In my head, I was Mick Jagger – all rock-star swagger and sex appeal.

When I arrived, though, the dancefloor was a sea of shuffling black-and-white penguin suits. In fact, I was the only man there not in a black tuxedo and bow tie. It was a painful evening spent hiding in corners, shamed, staring at my blue suede shoes.

Thankfully, times change. If the trad black dinner jacket was a safe option pre-pandemic, this season’s party dress is enjoying a flamboyant, feel-good comeback. From the maximalist velvet separates of Tom Ford, Gucci and Ralph Lauren Purple Label to Alexander McQueen’s abstract “spray paint-esque” patterned suiting, or Brioni’s teal- and toffee-coloured high-shine tuxedos, in 2022 formalwear has finally found its fun side.

From their Stockholm atelier, Saman Amel and Dag Granath, the 29-year-old co-founders of made-to-measure tailor Saman Amel, are seeing a record demand for their contemporary party suits. “Eveningwear sales are up 95 per cent on 2021,” Granath reports. Crucially, eveningwear doesn’t mean what it used to, according to these two forward-thinking tailors. “We’re not talking about tuxedos, but things you wear for parties, dinners out and gallery openings,” Granath continues. “We think of eveningwear simply as pieces that aren’t for the office, which feel sharper and sexier than everyday staples, and are designed to make you feel good.” To them this can be anything from an ivory slub silk jacket layered over a black knitted silk-and-cashmere shirt to a deconstructed mohair suit or a tailored cashmere blouson, paired with wide-leg trousers that swish about satisfyingly.

Moreover, this freer definition of men’s eveningwear is being driven by a changing customer base. “A new kind of client is coming to us who isn’t really accustomed to wearing tailoring,” Amel explains. “Many of our eveningwear clients are now artists, designers or musicians. They’re into fashion and they have a strong sense of style, but they haven’t felt the need to wear tailoring before.” So, why are they now? “Men are excited to get dressed again. We’re seeing that people in creative industries are wanting to look elegant. If they were wearing T-shirts pre-pandemic, now they’re in silk shirts and tailored jackets.”

In Milan, Zegna, one of the powerhouses of conceptual tailoring, is seeing this shift too. “That celebratory feeling of eveningwear isn’t restricted to traditional pieces any longer. It’s more about clothes for special moments,” says Alessandro Sartori, the brand’s artistic director. “Of course, the demand [for eveningwear] has increased. We want something special: a different colour, a different fabric. We want to represent ourselves in a new way.” Zegna’s Red Carpet Collection typifies this mood. Glitzy evening suits are styled with tonal cashmere-silk turtlenecks to be less formal. Standout pieces include a powder-blue wool and silk jacquard two-piece suit, layered with a slouchy-collared rollneck, or a dark plum jacquard three-piece suit, with a purple dress shirt and satin bow tie to match.

Crucially, though, the collection isn’t just about tuxedos. Elevated silk bomber jackets are layered over superfine-cashmere sweaters and paired with mohair tailored trousers, while reinvented chore jackets appear



Above: Pape wears DOLCE & GABBANA double-crepe blazer, POA. VIVIENNE WESTWOOD cotton shirt, £305. WALES BONNER wool trousers, £585

in featherweight tailoring fabrics. “The demand for luxury leisurewear translated into eveningwear is really increasing. Whether an overshirt, bomber jacket, or oversized blouson, we’re using special fabrics, ultra-light constructions and silk linings,” Sartori explains.

Evening-ready casualwear is a trend in itself. Hermès’s AW22 show featured a dark-green leather zip-through blouson paired with matching leather tailored trousers that reinvent the concept of a dinner suit. There was also a brown

## “MEN ARE EXCITED TO GET DRESSED AGAIN – THEY WANT TO LOOK ELEGANT”

leather two-piece suit, styled with a pale technical poplin top – perfect for after-hours partying. Elsewhere, Saint Laurent’s black patent floor-length trench coats capture a certain evening-worthy swagger, as does Dunhill’s. Louis Vuitton’s AW22 tailoring is anything but corporate, with oversized cuts in purple satin and teal velvet, while Lemaire’s signature “dry silk” separates reference classic eveningwear with their shawl collars and flowing trousers.

To menswear stylist Gareth Scourfield, whose celebrity clients include Daniel Craig and Richard Madden,

the loosening up of party season style is long overdue. “It’s an invitation to dress in a way that feels good to you. Velvet and jacquard jackets are a great way to go. Stick with the classic jewellery box of colours: sapphires and emeralds, or ruby reds, which always look great with dark dress trousers. These colours break up the traditional tuxedo in a way that’s different but not completely out there.”

On Savile Row, Edward Sexton has designed an eveningwear collection that feels unashamedly luxurious; with chocolate, navy and bottle green velvet suits, wool jacquard jackets and even graphic yellow-and-black wool blazers on show, underpinned by silk shirts with spear-point collars. “Our designs are deliberately bold this season, with lots of colour, interesting tones and textures,” says creative director Dominic Sebag-Montefiore. “We’re really pushing our designs to ensure the suit stays relevant. I think for a lot of people the suit is now quite subversive. The business suit is dead, so long live the party suit.”

Is it time to channel your inner Mick Jagger then? Sartori thinks so, with one important caveat. “By ‘sexy’, we mean a new kind of sexy,” he says. “Men today are not responding to the old, hyper-masculine, shirt-fully-unbuttoned kind of sexiness of the ’80s and ’90s, but a more refined sexiness that’s about tailoring and elegance.” Granath agrees: “Party season style isn’t necessarily about the rules of classic eveningwear any more, it’s about looking sexy and interesting,” he says. “That could mean a perfect dinner suit or a raw silk jacket with a rollneck and jeans. The most important thing is to feel good.” Maybe I’ll have to give the navy silk jacket another spin, after all. ■HTSI



# How to host it

A FESTIVE FEASTING SPECIAL WITH SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE FAMILIES

Sophie Bille Brahe (standing) and her brother Frederik (on her left) sharing a toast with (clockwise from bottom left) their mother Elisabeth Bille Brahe, Emelie Johansson, Nikolaj Møller, Sascha Oda Adler, Sophie's boyfriend Jeppe Juel Møller, Silas Adler and Frederik's wife Caroline Bille Brahe, before beginning their meal with pumpkin soup and truffle whipped cream

## The Bille Brahes

Jewellery designer Sophie and her chef brother Frederik put family at the fore in Copenhagen. Photography by *Rasmus Weng Karlsen*

**M**ealtime has always been an occasion for the Bille Brahes. When they were growing up in the family home in Hellerup, north of Copenhagen, the dinner table was a place to catch up. "Ever since I was a little girl, it was really important that every evening was special," says the fine jeweller Sophie Bille Brahe. "No matter how crazy-wild a day you have had, you enjoy this very short time where you are together. For me, it's also somehow relaxing; it's a way where you come down from your day."

Sophie and her brother, Frederik Bille Brahe – the chef behind Copenhagen's Café Atelier September and Apollo Bar & Kantine – meet for a meal with their families every Sunday, where they take turns cooking with their children. "There's the older generation – my mother is there – so there's this caring aspect and connectedness," says Frederik, who has two children with model and fashion







Far left: carciofi alla romana. Bottom left: Caroline, Sophie, Elisabeth and Frederik with Sophie's children, Beate and Johan, and the family dog, Maester. Left: pouring a champagne tower. Below: Frederik bringing in the soup with friend Anton Bruusgaard. Bottom: Maester gets a taste



“FOOD IS JUST A GOOD ASSEMBLY POINT FOR BRINGING EVERYONE TO THE TABLE”



designer Caroline Bille Brahe. “Food is just a good assembly point for bringing everyone to the table to sit and talk.”

With more celebratory occasions, the cooking tends to fall to Frederik, who uses seasonal, locally sourced produce where possible. “When it comes to hosting, I try just to be generous. I make sure I get wonderful products and have some nice snacks ready, and good wine. Cooking with friends is always nicer when it happens naturally.” For a starter, he will often prepare artichokes, such as carciofi alla romana, cooked in white wine with mint, parsley and garlic, or carciofi alla giudia, with the artichokes peeled and deep-fried so they open like a flower. Another popular dish is pumpkin soup cooked with shallots and white wine, served in a hollowed-out pumpkin with a dollop of truffle whipped cream. “It’s fun and it looks so nice on the table,” adds Frederik. “The idea is for it to taste super-pumpkin-y – sometimes if you have the singular essence of something extremely clear, then you actually enjoy it more.”

For the main event, Frederik will often prepare a dish centred on mushrooms, such as porcini tarte tatin with caramelised shallots, served with cavolo nero that has been lightly stewed with chilli and garlic. “Everything is quite simple,” he explains. “Our goal is to make something that feels like it could be a normal dinner at home, but that is still interesting – a true experience.”

Adds Sophie: “The worst thing is when you come to a dinner where it’s too tight – you know they’re playing a playlist that they only made for when they have people over, not of the music they love. You can have beautiful surroundings, but still feel really uncomfortable,” she says. Sophie notes the Danish author Karen Blixen, of *Out of Africa* fame, would always make flowers for the table that would somehow help the conversation. “So, for instance, she would put cabbage in her flower bouquets,” says Sophie. “Most of all, it’s important to make a space that has room for conversation for old, for young. At least, that’s what I like to do.” **JESSICA BERESFORD**







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“THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IS ABUNDANCE”



## Laila Gohar and Ignacio Mattos

*HTSI* columnist Laila and her partner share a seasonal meal with her adopted New York family. Photography by *Adrianna Glaviano*

Generally like projects that are long, laborious and a little bit tedious,” says Laila Gohar, of her preferred hosting style. In a professional capacity, the New York-based cook concocts surrealist installations – such as chairs made out of cake, butter sculptures or asparagus towers – for fashion and art events. For more intimate gatherings with family and friends, Gohar prepares meals that turn humble ingredients into something hearty and delicious.

Take a French cassoulet, which is often made over two days and has numerous steps, “but is something that can involve various members of the family and friend group”, she says. “It feels like a big, slightly overbearing hug, but in a good way. The whole thing takes a while to make, and once you eat it, you go into a bit of a coma.” In her version, Gohar includes tarbais beans, duck confit, pancetta and pork sausage sourced from the restaurant of her boyfriend, fellow chef Ignacio Mattos, who owns New York haunts *Estela* and *Altro Paradiso*. “My boyfriend and I often cook together, and we divide up the tasks. So with something like this, I started confiting the duck the night before, then he jumped in and made the base, so we sort of alternate.”

Gohar serves her cassoulet with a sharp radicchio salad, followed by raspberry tart for dessert, all with



a backdrop of some striking, maximalist tablecloth. “The most important element to communal eating – beyond the company – is abundance,” says Mattos. “The tablescape needs to be full, generous and jovial; once the table is covered in food, wine, flowers, people feel comfortable to pass around a plate, and that plate is a great ice-breaker.”

For Gohar, who is originally from Cairo, eating communally with friends is how she celebrates in the absence of having family close by. “I’m a foreigner in this country and most of my family is not around, so I don’t get to spend many holidays with them. But I’ve been in New York for around 12 years, so at this point I have a lot of friends that are like family, and we come together as a sort of chosen family.” **JB**

Top left: the cassoulet is served with a radicchio salad and green beans. Above: Laila slices the raspberry tart for dessert, alongside guests Ignacio Mattos (behind her) and Dianna Agron



Whitney Bromberg Hawkins (centre, in pink) and her husband Peter Hawkins (near left), with their son, Snowdon (seated front right), host their friends (clockwise from left), Elizabeth Saltzman, Tom Konig Oppenheimer (with Ursula, the family's whippet), Alison and Tilly Loehnis, Emilia Wickstead and Adam Beaumont Brown

## The Hawkins

Florist Whitney Bromberg Hawkins and her designer husband, Peter, throw a pasta party in west London. Photography by *Kate Martin*

**A** Texan by birth, Whitney Bromberg Hawkins (former SVP of communications at Tom Ford before she founded the luxury flower service Flowerbx in 2015) has been throwing parties for what she describes as her “crew” for decades. And her crew is very fashion. A typical gathering at the house in west London she shares with her husband and three children might include Emilia Wickstead (who designed the pink dress Whitney is wearing), stylist Elizabeth Saltzman and Net-a-Porter’s Alison Loehnis. Over the years the gang has grown to include new partners, children – and whippets. Often she’ll invite them round for Thanksgiving and, while she is vegetarian herself, she will still do a turkey.

The group here tonight is like family. “This party’s all about warmth and feeling at home,” says Whitney. “Of course, there are other types of party we throw too, where you mix up friend groups and get to see different sides of people, but that’s not what this feast is about.”

When it comes to entertaining, Whitney keeps it simple. For starters, her go-to is chilled crudité and guacamole. “I’m from Texas so I make my guacamole wicked and spicy.” Tonight, for the main course and pudding, she’s called on her friend Ruth Rogers of the River Café (“I’m not cooking because it’s busy and I’m a working mum”). The restaurant’s philosophy of letting the best ingredients speak for themselves chimes with her own single-varietal take on floral arrangements. “It’s my taste. Simple.” There’s spaghetti tossed in tomato sauce with antipasti misti, and for pudding “a beautiful lemon tart so it’s not so virtuous”.

Whitney likes to serve pink champagne to start, then Valpolicella (or vodka tonics for those who prefer). There might be a bit of Beyoncé and dancing before the night is out, shares Loehnis. And Whitney’s secret to the perfect end to the evening? “One bottle too many for the table and then everyone goes home at a not-insane hour.” **TIM AULD**

“I’M FROM TEXAS, SO I MAKE MY GUACAMOLE WICKED AND SPICY”





Top: Melissa Thompson with her baby son Dima. Above: Jackson Boxer and son Marlowe. Right: suckling pig with big mustardy chicory salad, roast potatoes and baked fennel. Top right: Kate and Charlie Boxer at the table with three of their grandchildren, Dima, Ruscha and Roma, plus Melissa. Far right: Jackson and Marlowe in the Brunswick House restaurant kitchen



“MY INTEREST IN FOOD IS PARTLY GREED BUT ALSO EMOTIONAL HUNGER”



### The Boxers

A family get-together calls for suckling pig, says chef Jackson Boxer. Photographed in south-west London by Lily Bertrand-Webb

A typical clan gathering with the Boxers is a beautifully rambunctious scene: events are typically held either in West Sussex or in the sumptuous private dining room of the Grade II-listed Georgian Brunswick House where Jackson Boxer opened his restaurant 12 years ago. “It’s a wonderful, anarchic kind of shed full of chandeliers,” says the chef-patron.

He’s fixing the food in the kitchen. His mother, painter Kate, is entertaining two of his four children, Ruscha, five, and Marlowe, three, who are skittering about underneath the table. Their mother, fashion designer Melissa, a Pre-Raphaelite beauty with long dark hair, nurses nine-week-old Dima in her arms. Dressed in a 1970s maxi dress, Roma, nine, is dancing about the room while Jackson’s father, Italo Deli owner Charlie, plays the fiddle.

It’s bohemian but with backbone, as you might expect from the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of one of the cooking world’s grande dames, Arabella Boxer. “Jackson was making up recipes and creating







  
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**LOUIS ROEDERER**  
HAND IN HAND WITH NATURE





Kate with her granddaughter Roma. Above: Jackson holds his son at the table. Right: Charlie playing the fiddle



recipe books as soon as he could write," says Kate. Adds Jackson: "Having this kind of lovely, joyful celebration of each other and food is kind of intrinsic to our family. My interest in food was partly genuine greed but also partly an emotional hunger for this magical childhood that Mum and Dad created for me and my brother."

The suckling pig is brought out, surrounded by fennel ("a happy pairing"). "There's something very, very primal about presenting the table with an entire animal cooked slowly and lovingly," says Jackson. "It speaks to that sense of a heritage celebration. Big, lavish, triumphant to place on the table. No one does it, but it's really easy and fun to do. You just put it in for four or five hours, and then whack up the temperature at the end to crisp the skin."

That sense of tradition echoes as the children dash around in their vintage finds. "I gravitate to historical clothing," says Melissa. "I love Victorian, Edwardian, '20s, '30s and '70s, then finding a way of combining them." The aesthetic is matched on the table: crockery, cutlery and candlesticks are a mix of junk-shop finds, designer-maker and heirloom pieces – some chipped, laughs Kate, all loved.

Glasses of wine are topped up and the golden crispy roasted potatoes continually nibbled. But pudding never quite materialises. "Often it's an afterthought," confesses Jackson. Everyone agrees that Charlie is the king of dessert – incredible crumbles, steamed puddings and rice puddings – while Kate is queen of autumnal pastries. But no one seems to notice there's nothing sweet to eat today. They're too busy chatting, dancing and playing. **BEATRICE HODGKIN**



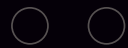




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Jordan Bourke and wife Rejina Pyo with their children, Kaya and Luka. Right and below: Pyo's colleagues Rora, Tate and Kirsty. Rejina and guests wear Rejina Pyo, and Kaya and Luka wear Rejina Pyo Kidswear



## Rejina Pyo and Jordan Bourke

The fashion designer and her chef husband celebrate in London with traditional Korean dishes. Photographed by *Lily Bertrand-Webb*

At a Korean dinner table, it's customary to load other people's plates with food rather than your own: "The onus is on you to look after everyone else – it's very selfless," says Jordan Bourke, the Irish chef and food writer. "And it means that you always get the most abundant, beautiful plate of food, because the person who's serving you wants to impress you with their generosity." Adds fashion designer Rejina Pyo: "You're not allowed to pour yourself a drink either. You have to wait until someone else tops you up – but it's not usually long!"

This sentiment feeds into their dining style at home in north London: the table is always heaving. "I hate the idea of someone wanting more," says Bourke. "When there's one potato left and it just sits on the plate because everyone is being too polite – I can't stand that. There should be way more food than you need, so you never have that problem."

The dishes themselves are usually influenced by Korea – where Pyo grew up – or London, where Bourke first worked as a chef. Mandu or Korean dumplings are often on the table, or dak-galbi, which is a chicken, vegetable and "squidgy" rice cake. Korean barbecue is always good for a crowd, cooking vegetables, pork belly or galbi, which are beef or pork ribs cut horizontally across the bone. "Then you serve it with scissors on the table, with lettuce leaves, rice, kimchi and sliced garlic, and people can assemble it themselves," adds Bourke. "There always tends to be something interactive in a way. It's quite nice, especially if there are guests that haven't met each other before."

For dessert, they will serve something like hotteok, a yeasted pancake stuffed with blitzed walnuts, cinnamon and brown sugar, or a frangipane tart made with chocolate and hazelnuts. "I love making it in a shallow but large tin, so when it goes down on the table, the width of it looks impressive," says Bourke. "I think for a lot of us, how we eat and how we cook and serve food is very visual." **JB**

"YOU HAVE TO LET SOMEONE ELSE TOP UP YOUR DRINK"





# #ENERGYINSIDE



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“WE DON’T PLAY  
CLUEDO ANY MORE  
– YOU STRUGGLE  
WITH CHEATING”



## The Delevingnes

Model Poppy Delevingne and her sister Chloe prep for an intimate evening of “mayhem”.  
Photographed by *Lily Bertrand-Webb*

**D**o you think that feels like a heart?” Poppy Delevingne holds a charred red pepper up to her elder sister, Chloe, a charity co-founder who has trained as a midwife. “No,” answers Chloe, giving it a perfunctory feel before continuing to chop hazelnuts for a green bean and burrata salad. There’s a party at the Delevingnes’ in Shepherd’s Bush, which means, as Poppy puts it, “a bit of mayhem with magic”.

A Delevingne party is an affair with “cosy lighting, lots of lamps, tons of candles – even if it’s the middle of the day – and people sitting on the floor”. Buckets hold ice-cold Della Vite rosé prosecco, often served with blackcurrant liqueur or homemade sloe gin (“sloe-gasms”, as Chloe calls them), and the pair will battle it out over the playlist: classic crooners such as Frank Sinatra and James Brown (Poppy’s choice) or dance tunes and Kylie Minogue (Chloe’s).

They’ve come up with a menu of Italian dishes to be served family-style (“we all think that we were Italian in a past life,” says Poppy), which they’ve cooked with the help of their friend, chef Jesse Jenkins. Over pistachio linen tablemats dotted with mushroom-shaped vases there are platters of red pepper, roasted tomato, onion and basil salad prepared by Poppy, green bean salad made by Chloe, butternut squash and prosecco rigatoni, and a

radicchio salad. For dessert there is a mountain of pavlova and a jiggly Della Vite rosé jelly studded with raspberries and blueberries. “We never do courses,” says Poppy. “It’s big plates with wooden spoons and everyone can dig in.”

At family parties, games are central but must be carefully chosen. “We don’t play Cluedo any more because you struggle with cheating,” says Chloe. When Cara is in town from LA, “she makes us play Sardines”, says Poppy, “and more extreme, wild games”, adds Chloe. With friends, music is the main event. “Late night, it’s always Disney – singalong,” says Poppy. The sisters all have set duets and favoured routines: *Moulin Rouge!*, *Aladdin* and the Spice Girls. “Usually at that point everyone’s leaving. And it will just be us, till dawn!” says Poppy. **BAYA SIMONS ■ HTSI**

Above: Poppy (left) and Chloe Delevingne. Top left: chef Jesse Jenkins. Right: raspberry and blueberry jelly made from Della Vite rosé prosecco, the sisters’ own wine label









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Left: a c1780 fan restored by antique-fan restorer Yolaine Voltz



A FAN RESTORED BY YOLAINE VOLTZ



Above: a c1910 mother-of-pearl and jay feather fan from the collection of Gert-Jan van Veghel. Left: Karl Lagerfeld and Linda Evangelista, 1991. Below: a c1860 fan restored by Voltz

VINTAGE

## Fans

Antique artistic creations are setting collectors a-flutter

WORDS BY  
CAMILLA BELL-DAVIES

As Eloïse Gilles, heritage expert at Parisian fan-maker Duvelleroy, puts it: “Fans embody the lightness of life, even in a difficult time.” A simple accessory, folding fans have been the subject of several exhibitions this autumn. “They bring us a nostalgia for a time when life was more flamboyant, when effort and fantasy was put into beautiful things,” says Swiss collector Gert-Jan van Veghel. “They always surprise people. When I open them, people never know what to expect.”

Fans originated in Japan and China as early as the sixth century, but when this exotic new accessory arrived in 17th-century Europe on Portuguese ships, the French nobility went wild. Although Asian “*brisé*” fans were elegant and uncluttered, made of carved ivory or wood, workshops in Paris began to tailor them to French sensibilities, working the simple folding fan into a showpiece of miniature artistry. It is these that have become a particular focus for European and American collectors. “The Parisians took fans to another level – up to 20 craftsmen would be employed to work on one piece,” says Yolaine Voltz, an antique-fan restorer.

Their ornamental complexity explains why French fans are often auctioned as unique pieces, whereas fans from Spain or Asia, though exquisite, can be sold by batch. Each piece tells a story; it is a window into the owner’s life. “A client once brought me a fan inlaid with tiny portraits of a husband and wife,” says Voltz. “I found a hidden button that pushed the husband’s portrait to one side, revealing a portrait of the wife’s lover slotted behind.” These mischievous “à système” fans have become cult collector’s items, says Georgina Letourmy-Bordier, a

fan-market specialist, who in 2012 auctioned a fan with a built-in music box and gold clock for a record SFr386,500 (about £328,928) at Geneva auction house Antiquorum. She’s seen others with snuff boxes or weapons hidden in the frames fetch high prices too.

Veghel started collecting fans more than 40 years ago, first buying small collections for

less than €50. Such bulk lots included fans used by companies in the 1920s to advertise their parties (some of which were scrawled on by famous attendees such as Edward VIII and Coco Chanel). “From there, I built,”

says Veghel. He used to travel to fan auctions in Paris held at Drouot by Coutau-Bégarie, but now their online auctions mean he can buy on a whim from his home near Geneva. His collection has bloomed into more than 500 feathered, sparkly or unusual lace fans, mainly from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Recent ivory bans have changed the market considerably, preventing the trading of some previously collectable 18th-century fans and many Asian fans. Those with sensitive materials such as horn or tortoiseshell are also becoming harder to sell. Now, fans made with exquisite woods, mother-of-pearl or precious metals are having their moment, says Letourmy-Bordier. These range from rare bejewelled Fabergé fans made for Russian royals to the sequined balloon fans of the belle époque and art nouveau fans painted with flowers and red-haired ladies (such as the dreamlike Amphitrite fan that Letourmy-Bordier sold for €150,000 at Coutau-Bégarie).

Today, more collectors are looking for artisans such as Félix Alexander, a favourite

### WHERE TO BUY

**Coutau-Bégarie** Paris: twice annual fan sales, coutaubegarie.com  
**Drouot** Paris, drouot.com  
**Sotheby’s Paris**, sothebys.com  
**Tennants** UK: a collection of more than 300 fans coming up for sale in the New Year, tennants.co.uk

### WHERE TO SEE

**The Fan Museum, London** thefanmuseum.org.uk  
**Musée de l’Éventail, Paris** annehoguet.fr

### WHAT TO READ

**Antique Fans: Building and Refining a Collection** by Margaretha Mazura, to be published by Crowood Press  
**Ōgi, A History of the Japanese Fan** (1992) by Julia Hutt and Hélène Alexander  
**A Collector’s Guide to Fans over the Ages** (1975) by Bertha De Vere Green  
**European Fans from Object d’Art to Patented Invention** (1994) by Maryse Volet



Above, from second from top: fans seen at Gay Pride have helped revive the trend, as have modern fans by makers such as Duvelleroy. Above: a restored fan by Yolaine Voltz. Below: *At the Theatre*, 1866, by James Hayllar. Bottom centre right: a fan restored by Voltz



of Queen Victoria whose pieces are characterised by engraved mother-of-pearl and lavish gilding. His fans are coveted as he would commissioned notable artists to paint the fan leaf. Gauguin, Pissarro and Degas are also known to have painted fan leaves. But good luck finding these, says Letourmy-Bordier: “Some are lost; they weren’t always mounted on fan sticks.”

But if you are looking for beauty and intrigue, the focus should not exclusively be on European fans, says Hélène Alexander, founder of The Fan Museum in Greenwich, London, where she houses her 4,000 pieces. She has a soft spot for Japanese fans, including the humorous wooden ones historically used in Japanese brothels. A clever mechanism causes the fan to open both ways, one side painted in delicate flowers, the other “secret” side adorned with giggling nudes or monks in compromising positions. Their rarity makes them highly sought after, says Alexander.

It’s not the first time, nor will it be the last, that fans have been a player in the seduction game. In the 1860s, Duvelleroy marketed a “fan language” as a flirting technique. The Parisians thought it all a hoax, and some collectors are still sniffy about Duvelleroy’s marketing ploy. But then isn’t that what fans are for – reinvention, flirtation and mischief? ■HTSI





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Left: custom monogrammed cards, from \$430. Right: bespoke holiday cards, POA, and the Victorian holiday collection, \$65 for set of 10



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WORDS BY BAYA SIMONS

Since 1878, when engraver John Dempsey and businessman George Carroll decided to open a stationery shop on East 14th Street, any New York party that's any New York party has likely been announced with a Dempsey & Carroll invitation. Providing its customers "with luxury writing papers but also advice on etiquette and proper decorum in a variety of social settings", the business rose to prominence along with the city's society scene – and it remains New York's most illustrious stationer.

The hand-engraved notecards, invitations and gift tags on pure cotton paper in white, ecru, grey or Dempsey blue (a deep cornflower), have since served "Katharine Hepburn, Ronald Reagan and George Steinbrenner, who owned the Yankees", says owner Lauren Marrus. "And Tom Ford just ordered last week. I can tell he's not shy about it because he put it in his movie," she says, referring to a scene in *Nocturnal Animals* where the protagonist's ex is shown with D&C engraved stationery.

"Our history, our heritage, our craftsmanship" is how Marrus sums up the continued appeal of the smart, awning-fronted shop, now located on Lexington Avenue. Inside, glass-fronted, polished wood cabinets stocked with paper goods and writing accoutrements line the walls. Two writing tables and upholstered chairs wait for those who like to come in for "a single thank-you note or card". "They'll sit down and write it in the shop," explains Marrus. It is a space purposefully designed not to feel overly commercial. "It doesn't look like a shop; it looks like a library in an Upper East Side apartment or a nice London flat. It has a very warm feeling".

Ready-to-buy products include notecards engraved with a golden frog brandishing a Martini, printed with New York taxis (\$65 for 10) or a single red heart (\$55 for 10), and invitations bearing a golden bumblebee and, in neat print, "You are invited for..." (\$50 for 10). Thank-you cards for sheepish party guests that read "[...] regrets her behaviour at [...]" (\$40 for 10) "are always a favourite among our clients", says Marrus.

The back half of the store houses paper samples and inks in "in every colour of the

rainbow", and is where clients can design bespoke monogrammed stationery, invitations or announcements. "We can accommodate most requests," explains Marrus breezily, from painted corners to handpainted borders, bevelled edges, hand-calligraphy, invitation assembly and envelope addressing. Her personal bespoke

**"IT DOESN'T  
LOOK LIKE  
A SHOP; IT  
LOOKS LIKE  
A LIBRARY"**

order is monogrammed light grey, thick, four-ply notecards with handpainted grey edges and grey tissue paper-lined envelopes. Marrus's ability to balance traditional service with playful design (one recent notecard is topped with a red rooster) has ensured the shop's appeal carries from generation to generation. "We might have done your grandmother's wedding. How do we make sure we do your wedding and



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your children's weddings?" she says. But success wasn't always on the cards. When Marrus purchased the business in 2004, it was bankrupt and run down by the rise of digitalised communications. She renovated the space and opened the shop on 15 September 2008 – the day that Lehman Brothers collapsed. It was her idea to make business cards, and "that January was one of our biggest months ever", she recalls. "A lot of people were looking for jobs. So we needed to shift to where the market [was] growing."

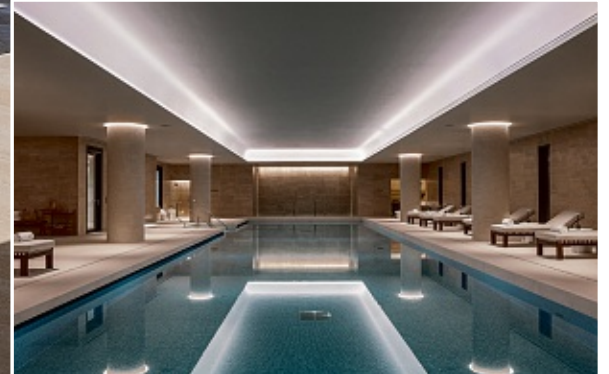
Before long, Marrus had restored the shop to its former cultural prominence. When Donna Tartt's Pulitzer-winning novel *The Goldfinch* came out in 2013, Dempsey & Carroll was delighted to discover its stationery in the pages, in the hands of the kindly, antique-collecting, Park Avenue-residing mother-figure Mrs Barbour, who responds to her letters with "a line or two on her monogrammed correspondence cards from Dempsey & Carroll". "We feel proud of that," says Marrus with a smile. ■HTSI



Above: American flag-engraved cards and envelopes, \$65 for 10. Left: an engraved, custom-monogrammed wedding suite, POA

Cards and envelopes, from top: New York Taxi, \$65 for 10. Regrets Her Behaviour, \$40 for 10. Write Away collection, \$105. Rooster, \$95 for 10. Love, \$55 for 10





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### POTATO SMILEYS

Krug Grand Cuvée, £380, [thefinestbubble.com](http://thefinestbubble.com)

### DOSA

Billecart Salmon Rosé NV, £59.95, [wanderlustwine.co.uk](http://wanderlustwine.co.uk)



### FISH AND CHIPS

Didier Herbert Cuve 4, £95, [sipchampagnes.com](http://sipchampagnes.com)

### ONION RINGS

Groques Laval Les Chênes Brut Nature, £148, [bubbleshoplondon.com](http://bubbleshoplondon.com)



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Fleury Rosé de Saignée, £45.95, [plus-de-bulles.co.uk](http://plus-de-bulles.co.uk) or Moussé Fils Les Vignes de mon Village, €45, [divinecellar.com](http://divinecellar.com)

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Jean-Marc Sélèque, Quintette, Extra Brut, £49, [bubbleshoplondon.com](http://bubbleshoplondon.com)



DRINKING

## Fizz and chips

Why does champagne pair so well with junk food? Turns out there's a science to it, writes *Alice Lascelles*

**W**e're at that time of year when dedicated hosts like to raise their canapé game. But what do wine pros really eat when they're popping corks behind closed doors? The answer, most of the time, is not fancy at all.

"I'm total trash and I love all things junk – pizza is my favourite match," says Ariel Arce, the entrepreneur behind New York bars Air's Champagne Parlour and Niche Niche, where grower champagnes are served with caviar "bumps" and greasy potato chips. "I recently had a pizza with Fleury Rosé de Saignée that matched the sweet and saltiness."

"I also love Taco Bell. My bubbles of choice for a Crunchwrap Supreme would be Dhondt-Grellet Cramant Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut – it's got the acid to stand up to the fat. Just because the food is inexpensive doesn't mean the wine has to be too."

Raj Vaidya, director of ops for New York's La Fête du Champagne, is also a fan of pizza and fizz. "My favourite pairing, which I indulge in quite often, is a lean, extra-brut, predominantly Pinot Meunier champagne – I love Moussé Fils." Vaidya's other crush is south Indian street food – especially masala dosas: "slightly sour, yeasty crêpes made of rice and lentil flour with spices and vegetables thrown in. I love contrasting the dosa with the inherent fanciness of a rosé champagne – a young rosé like Billecart-Salmon's signature non-vintage is a great balance to those spicy-sour flavours."

Sommelier Bert Blaize, co-author of *Which Wine When*, has slummed it with more prestige cuvées than he'd like to say. "When I was working at Clove Club we'd often have leftover champagne at the end of the week which needed finishing up – I have very happy memories of going home after a shift and having Deliveroo McDonald's with slightly flat Krug."

Some might consider this pairing heresy. But Blaize says there's serious flavour science at play: "A good food match for champagne needs three things: fat, which softens and rounds the acid in the wine; protein to balance the mouthfeel; and carbs, which really draw out the richer aspects of ageing on the lees [spent yeast]. And fast food is full of all three."

### "I HAVE VERY HAPPY MEMORIES OF McDONALD'S WITH SLIGHTLY FLAT KRUG"

Sandia Chang has poured wine at top restaurants including Noma and Per Se. But it was her Fitzrovia bar Bubbledogs, which served hot dogs and indie champagnes, that really made her name. These days, she runs the two-Michelin-star Kitchen Table restaurant with her husband, chef James Knappett, where a champagne flight costs £250. But she remains a staunch defender of the hi-low match: "Anything fatty and salty is great – I love champagne with french fries. I also like Skips or prawn cocktail crisps with something light and super-fresh like J-M Sélèque's Quintette blanc de blancs."

Victoria Moore, author of *Fried Eggs & Rioja: What to Drink with Absolutely Everything*, likes a sparkling wine

Above: Veuve Clicquot opened a pop-up greasy spoon in London this year



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“with the crunch of a deep-fried Scotch egg” (though her preference is for the English sparkler Coates & Seely NV, rather than champagne).

If it's fried, it flies, essentially – which bodes well for British stodge. Peter Crawford, the Scottish co-founder of Decanter's Champagne Retailer of the Year, Sip Champagnes, likes to kick back with champagne and fish and chips. He suggests Didier Herbert Cuve 4, a Pinot Noir/Chardonnay blend that marries rich and savoury oak notes with tartare sauce-like acidity.

**AT THE SHOREDITCH BAR** Seed Library the current luxury flex is potato smileys with Krug Grande Cuvée. Veuve Clicquot also recently did a pop-up greasy spoon serving Yellow Label and fried eggs. “The unexpected gets people talking, breaks down the barriers and allows guests to have fun,” says Xavier Cadiou, director of Polar Black Events, which created the Clicquot caff. “It's a surprise for guests that's refreshing. There is a confidence in breaking the rules.”

Not every Champenois sees the funny side. But Odilon de Varine, cellar master at Champagne Gosset, is game. “I love Marmite and would pair Marmite on toast with Gosset Grande Réserve,” he says, “because its aromatic bouquet is powerful enough to match Marmite's own power. The yeasty feel of Marmite will pair with the Champagne; its iodine sensation also responds to Marmite's saltiness.” Charline Drappier's guilty pleasure is Champagne Drappier Brut Nature and popcorn “especially in front of a movie”.

The blood-red Glue Pot diner in Champagne's “capital” Reims has been pairing burgers and loud music with classy fizz since 1970. The new menu reads like a who's who of the grower scene: Savart, Tarlant, Agrapart, Geoffroy, Brochet, Guillaume Sélosse.

You can sip Larmandier-Bernier with a banana split or Georges Laval with a side of onion rings – and all at a fraction of the price you'd pay for these champagnes in restaurants overseas. I once had dinner there with the celebrated grower Eric Rodez. His powerful, elegant wines were fantastic with food – especially the Ambonnay Grand Cru Rosé. It was, I'm afraid, the Big Boy Burger that ultimately defeated me. ■HTSI

📷 @alicescelles

Right: recipes from *Snacks for Dinner*, including revived olives, mixed mushroom pâté and citrus carrots



EATING

## Hot dips

Give your guests a taste sensation this season. By *Ajesh Patalay*

I've always had a soft spot for dip. “The word practically requires an exclamation point,” says American cook Lukas Volger in his new book *Snacks for Dinner*. And he's right, it does. “Dip is fun! Dip is a party! Dip is a sigh of relief, because with dip at the table, you can let your pretences down a little.” I've got nothing against staples such as sour cream and chive, tzatziki or guacamole. But when you want something with a bit more gastronomic clout, what are your choices beyond hummus?

*Snacks for Dinner* devotes a whole chapter to dips that feel adventurous and luxurious while being relatively simple to make. Many are built around nut and seed butters or cheese. The toasted walnut and feta dip combines earthiness with creamy tang in what Volger calls a “distinctively rich” crowd-pleaser akin to “savory frosting”. His toasted chilli/nut butter spread is basically peanut butter and dried ancho chilli, blended with maple syrup and lime and sprinkled with spring onions. Another easy upgrade, the cottage-cheese gribiche adds texture and bite to standard curd cheese with capers, cornichons, cucumber, parsley, mustard and vinegar.

For special occasions including New Year's Eve, Volger swears by his mixed-mushroom pâté containing dried porcini, cremini, miso, cashew, tahini and a small glug of brandy or whisky. “When I first started making it, over a decade ago, I wanted to contribute a meatless dip that'd feel super-deluxe,” he reports. “I used to make it with heavy cream and butter. It became vegan and it's just as rich and satisfying.”

On crudités, Volger lays out what amounts to a manifesto on what works and doesn't, including how vegetables should be “optimised as a dip vessel”. He also makes the case for baking your own crackers, which he insists is surprisingly doable and a great way to impress. Given that guests often assume crackers are store-bought, does he make a point of enlightening them? “I probably wouldn't pause the conversation to make a point of it,” he says, “but luckily with homemade crackers, you can tell. They have a rustic look, which is more attractive. I make long strips or slabs, so people can just break a piece off.”

**AMONG THE PIQUANT DIPS IN *Parsi***, a new book on Parsi cooking by Farokh Talati, head chef at St John Bread and Wine in London's Spitalfields, is a tamarind ketchup worth trying. If you don't fancy making it from scratch, you can approximate a version by mixing tamarind with tomato relish and jaggery, an unrefined sugar used in the Indian subcontinent that lends a rugged depth of flavour. Talati's beetroot and mustard seed chutney is delicious but dangerous if you're anywhere near pale furnishings. As a precautionary step, Talati suggests pre-spooning the relish into chicory boats and adding a dollop of goat's curd. Arguably this turns the dip into a canapé, but let's not quibble.

Even simpler, his mango-pickle mayonnaise is made by whizzing up mango pickle with one large egg and a dribbling of oil, which turns its tangy sourness into a slather-able emulsion. If you don't serve it with cumin- or black pepper-studded poppadom, Talati suggests a Parsi snack called Far Far. These prawn-cracker-like wafers come in rainbow shades (from Asian grocery stores), puff up in hot oil and are best showered with salt and pepper or chaat masala.

Deep-fried calf brain is Talati's other radical suggestion (ideally fried in beef dripping): “There's the crispy breaded exterior and silken custardy interior and because calf brains don't have their own flavour, they make the perfect vehicle for sauce,” he urges. “If you dip calf brains into mango pickle mayonnaise, I promise you'll be obsessed.”

### “CALF BRAINS MAKE THE PERFECT VEHICLE FOR SAUCE”

The dips in *Kin Thai* by British-Thai chef John Chantarasak require a dozen ingredients and are as gourmet as they come. They include lon gapi (shrimp and coconut cream relish) to pair with raw or deep-fried vegetables; akhar sapi thong (cashew and dill relish) served with raw cucumber, chicory, fennel or leafy-topped radishes; and nahm prik num (grilled long-chilli relish) to accompany pork scratchings or Chiang Mai herbal sausage, a slow-grilled aromatic sausage sometimes found in the freezer section of Asian supermarkets. “Failing that, a good-quality beef jerky would work,” says Chantarasak.

Sweet dips are welcome, too. A Kin Thai recipe for pandan custard would make the perfect dip served with sugar-dusted dough sticks or thick-cut toasted brioche. Or why not enliven your food station with a buffet of sweet dips (such as butterscotch sauce, mascarpone cream and berry compôte) for dunking ripe fruit? “Is caramel sauce a dip? Is a bowl of whipped cream... dip? It all comes down to how you approach it, especially if you lean into dessert being interactive,” says Volger.

Making dips interactive is certainly a way of revitalising the classics. Franco-Palestinian chef Fadi Kattan, who is just opening the restaurant Akub in Notting Hill, is known for serving make-your-own hummus at pop-up dinners. Guests are given chickpeas, a wedge of lemon, salt, cumin, sumac, paprika, tahini, extra virgin olive oil and a fork for mashing. For a party, you could pile the warmed chickpeas and spices into individual ramekins and pass around a jug of lemony oil to pour on top. “Bread isn't necessary,” says Kattan, who likes eating hummus with a teaspoon. It begs the question: is a dip still a dip if there's nothing to do the dipping? ■HTSI

📷 @ajesh34



# HOW TO SPEND IT IN...



Left: Anna Shaffer wears JW Anderson dress and shoes next to Regent's Canal. Above: meat from butcher's Hill & Szrok. Right: the actress in Hector's. Below: Brawn on Columbia Road



"MY FAVOURITE NIGHT OUT IN SOHO IS TRISHA'S, A BASEMENT BAR ON GREEK STREET"



## LONDON

Actress Anna Shaffer on her favourite places to party in the capital

INTERVIEW BY ROSANNA DODDS  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOSHUA TARN

A couple of years ago my now-husband Jimmy and I were on a walk when he said: "Right! I think we should move to Angel, start a business and get married." Jimmy is impulsive in the best kind of way: it means we end up doing really fun things. He proposed two weeks later, and 18 months ago we opened Hector's – first as a wine shop, with the bar coming later.

Now we live in Drayton Park, a leafy area next to the Arsenal Stadium. Jimmy and I are both from north London originally – he's from Angel, I'm from Hornsey – so we haven't strayed too far. But there's still a bit of tribalism: I grew up in a staunch Tottenham household, so my dad can find it quite difficult when he visits. We got married at Islington Town Hall and he was devastated.

London is a real renaissance city, a place where you can constantly reinvent yourself and find different things to do. It's also a place where no one is ever free: if you make a plan, it's in three months' time, so it becomes a celebration when you eventually meet up. And when you do it's always fun and exaggerated – we're not going to a café, we're going out and having Martinis...

Often I'll head to east London, where there's a triangle of fantastic restaurants: Bright is absolutely delicious and P Franco was a huge influence when we started Hector's. But my favourite restaurant in the entire world – not just London – is Brawn on Columbia Road. Any time friends want to meet up, I beg to go to Brawn. I'm surprised I haven't been



Below: the actress at (above) Hector's, the wine shop and bar she founded with her husband



barred at this point. They've got an amazing wine list – lots of rare champagne – and the tiramisu is unbelievable. I'd say that it's the best tiramisu in the world – and I've tried a lot.

Still, you can't beat going into town – nipping into Soho and going somewhere classic like Brasserie Zédel is always fun. Or I'll go to Dukes Hotel for a Martini. Until recently I'd always been an olive girl – it was always Dirty Martinis, dirty as possible, filthy – but now I've come round to the twist. It's a good pick-me-up if you've been out eating and drinking all day: then you can go on to the next place for a boogie.

My favourite night out in Soho is Trisha's, a basement bar on Greek Street. It's very loud, very sweaty – think picnic tablecloths and £1 beers. Most of all, though, I like to do karaoke. No celebration is complete unless you are belting out something fabulous at the end of the night. There's an amazing Korean place, Jihwaja, in Vauxhall, where you can eat fried chicken and sing the night away. My song of choice is "Shallow", the duet with Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper – and I like to sing both parts.

I go to the cinema as much as possible, often at the old Renoir in Bloomsbury, now a Curzon, which is close to another of my favourite restaurants, Ciao Bella. They can accommodate huge tables, and it feels quite cheap and cheerful. Jimmy and I are attempting to work our way through the whole pasta menu by the end of the year. Back in town, the Prince Charles is also a great cinema – last time I saw *Midnight Cowboy* – and I love going to the BFI for a seasonal showing of *It's a Wonderful Life*.

If I'm staying in I'll probably ransack Hector's for something fab, like a Pinot Noir champagne, then I'll go to Fin & Flounder in Broadway Market to pick up oysters and cured salmon. Across the road you've also got Hill & Szrok, which is perfect if you're after a nice bit of meat. I always feel I can make a better roast at home, but if it's joyful, hearty food that you're after and you don't want to cook, head to Towpath on Regent's Canal. Even in the colder months it's nice to sit outside and watch the world go by.

Sometimes Jimmy and I will stay at the Town Hall Hotel in Bethnal Green for a treat. The rooms are massive, there's a gorgeous pool and being a tourist in your own city always feels quite special. Otherwise we just eat and drink. This Christmas I'm actually looking forward to chilling a bit, but I'll definitely be drinking some kind of champagne somewhere. And I'm sure there'll be a Martini in play, too. ■HTSI

### HOTELS

**Dukes** [dukeshotel.com](http://dukeshotel.com)  
**Town Hall Hotel**  
[townhallhotel.com](http://townhallhotel.com)

### BARS, CAFES, RESTAURANTS

**Brawn** [brawn.co](http://brawn.co)  
**Brasserie Zédel**  
[brasseriezedel.com](http://brasseriezedel.com)  
**Bright** [brightrestaurant.co.uk](http://brightrestaurant.co.uk)  
**Ciao Bella**  
[ciaobellarestaurant.co.uk](http://ciaobellarestaurant.co.uk)  
**Hector's** [hectorslondon.co.uk](http://hectorslondon.co.uk)  
**P Franco** [pfranco.co.uk](http://pfranco.co.uk)  
**Towpath** [towpathlondon.com](http://towpathlondon.com)  
**Trisha's** 57 Greek St, London W1  
(020-7437 9536)

### KARAOKE BARS, CINEMAS

**BFI Southbank**  
[whatson.bfi.org.uk](http://whatson.bfi.org.uk)  
**Curzon Bloomsbury**  
[curzon.com](http://curzon.com)  
**Jihwaja** [jihwaja.co.uk](http://jihwaja.co.uk)  
**The Prince Charles Cinema**  
[princecharlescinema.com](http://princecharlescinema.com)

### SHOPS

**Fin & Flounder** 71 Broadway  
Market, London E8 (020-7241 6000)  
**Hill & Szrok** [thesmallherd.co.uk](http://thesmallherd.co.uk)



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## CARRERA

*"I've learned not to take time for granted. What drives me is knowing that the clock is ticking."*

*Ryan Reynolds*

