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August 2019

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TWO OF A KIND
MODEL INDIRA SCOTT WEARS PRADA EARRINGS. MIU MIU DRESS. PHOTOGRAPHED BY JACKIE NICKERSON.

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CONTACT SPORT
U.S. WOMEN NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM DEFENDER ALI KRIEGER (LEFT) WEARS A FLORAVERE DRESS. TEAMMATE AND FIANCÉE ASHLYN HARRIS WEARS A GUCCI JACKET AND SHORTS. PHOTOGRAPHED BY CAROLYN DRAKE.

Cover Look
Dangerous Woman
Singer Ariana Grande (with her dog Toulouse) wears a Dior dress and bodysuit. Eric Javits hat. Ana Khouri ear cuff. To get this look, try: Infallible Fresh Wear Foundation in 465 Sand, Summer Belle Collection Bronze Please! in Amalfi, Medium, Visible Lift Radiance Cheek Duo in Blushing in Bronze, Unlimited Mascara in Washable Blackest Black, Brow Stylist Definer in Soft Black, and Summer Belle Collection Glowing Lip Gloss in Sea You Soon. All by L'Oréal Paris. Hair, Josh Liu; makeup, Hannah Murray. Details, see In This Issue.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz. Fashion Editor: Tonne Goodman.

CAROLYN DRAKE OF MAGNUM PHOTOS. FASHION EDITOR: JORDEN BICKHAM. HAIR, SCOTT PATRIC; MAKEUP, LENNIE BILLY. PRODUCED BY SELECT SERVICES. DETAILS, SEE IN THI ISSUE.

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L'ORÉAL PARIS

Letter from the Editor

WOMEN OF SUBSTANCE
ABOVE, FROM LEFT: AMY KLOBUCHAR, TULSI GABBARD, KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND, ELIZABETH WARREN, AND KAMALA HARRIS, PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ. LEFT: LOOKS FROM KOCHÉ, PRADA, RODARTE, AND TORY BURCH, PHOTOGRAPHED BY ZOË GHERTNER.

Strength in Numbers

THIS MONTH WE CELEBRATE WOMEN of ambition and achievement, from cover star Ariana Grande—whose unflinching honesty, as you will read in writer Rob Haskell's excellent profile, is light-years away from the usual carefully constructed pop persona—to the phenomenal number of designers offering clothes as real as they are chic.

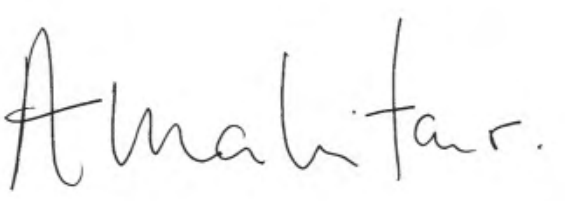
Every issue of *Vogue,* of course, is dedicated to women who've triumphed in their chosen field, be it fashion, politics, sports, business, or the arts. But there is something wonderfully energizing about the sheer number taking the lead in our world today, and we wanted to celebrate them for impacting and informing every aspect of our lives. We owe so much to those women who, in the last few years, came forward to challenge the status quo and to speak out about the many terrible abuses that went unspoken and unacknowledged for so long. Yet out of all of this, so much of it painful and shocking, has emerged something positive: greater accountability and transparency—and the determination that things should and will be different.

That's nowhere more evident than in our current political landscape. As we edge toward next year's election, the issues that directly affect us, from economic inequality to reproductive rights, have been thrown into sharp relief and will likely (and rightfully) take center stage in 2020. There is an unprecedented number of female candidates vying for the Democratic nomination, and we brought several of the most prominent—Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Tulsi Gabbard—together to be photographed by Annie Leibovitz to commemorate what is truly a historic moment.

The resulting pictures had a captivatingly direct quality to them; none of the women were interested in being portrayed as shellacked in the conventional (and stereotypically male) presentation of political power. Yet one of Annie's images in particular leaped out at me, taken as the shoot was wrapping, with the candidates high-fiving each other—an act of sisterhood and solidarity. The accompanying story, written by Amy Chozick, smartly and skillfully deconstructs the intersections and divergences of the candidates' beliefs, while also underscoring how each has brought a much-needed decorum and respect to the proceedings.

Elsewhere, we spotlight a whole new group of beauty entrepreneurs—the "unicorns," as they've been labeled. It's worth noting that while they range in age from 21 (Kylie Jenner) to 60 (Anastasia Soare), what unites them, as Chloe Malle points out, is their rejection of impossible beauty standards in favor of celebrating individuality and community, harnessing the huge potential of digital technology along the way. By doing so, they've built businesses valued at a billion dollars and up—way up.

Lastly, I have not been alone at *Vogue* in despairing at the lack of female designers working in the industry, save for a few at those global powerhouses we all know and admire and wear; it's been a constant refrain in our weekly fashion meetings for years. I'm happy to report that this is no longer the case, as you can see from the sitting styled by Camilla Nickerson and shot by Zoë Ghertner (Zoë and Annie are just two of this issue's cast of female-only photographers). Women designers are now to be found all over the globe, as diverse in age as the politicians or beauty unicorns, leading their businesses in ways that are often as sensitive to the more urgent concerns of life (sustainability, inclusivity, working collectively) as they are to the quotidian needs of our closets. They never forget that there's a much, much bigger world out there.



TOP LEFT: FASHION EDITOR: CAMILLA NICKERSON. HAIR, JAMES PECIS; MAKEUP, HANNAH MURRAY. TOP RIGHT: SITTINGS EDITOR: TONNE GOODMAN. HAIR AND MAKEUP, CARRIE LAMARCA.

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WOMEN IN LOVE *LA BRANCHE DE LAURIER*, BY PIERRE BONCOMPAIN.

The Secret History

As a young girl, Adrienne Brodeur often stood in the shadows of her glamorous, charismatic mother. Then one day her mother woke her up with a whisper that would change both of their lives.

"Wake up, Rennie."

I felt a hand on my shoulder and pulled the sheet over my head. "Rennie, please." Even before I turned and saw her face, I could hear a peculiar quaver in my mother's whisper. Her voice sounded hesitant and desperate. The mattress sank where she lowered herself beside me, and my body stiffened against the depression. I kept my eyes shut and steadied my exhalations.

"Rennie!" The whisper, more urgent now, still held an unfamiliar tremor. She pulled down the sheet. "Please wake up."

I opened my eyes. Malabar was in her nightgown, her hair mussed. I sat up.

"Mom, what's wrong? Is everything OK?"

"Ben Souther just kissed me."* I took in this information. Tried to make sense of it. Couldn't. I rubbed my eyes. My mother was still there beside me.

"Ben kissed me," my mother repeated. A noun, a verb, an object—such a simple sentence, really, and yet I couldn't comprehend it. Why would Ben Souther, a family friend, kiss my mother? It wasn't that I was naive; at age 14, I knew that people kissed people they weren't supposed to. My parents had not shielded me from stories of both of their transgressions during their marriage, and in this way, I knew more about infidelity than most children. I was four when my parents broke up, six when my father remarried, seven when that new marriage started to fall apart, and eight when my mother was finally able to wed my stepfather, Charles, who'd been separated from, but still married to, his first wife when they met.

Ben was married, too, of course, to Lily. The Southers had been married for 35 years.

Mom and Charles. Ben and Lily.

The four of them had been couple-friends for as long as my mother and stepfather had known each other, about a decade now.

That's what really stumped me about the kiss—the friendship between Ben and Charles. The two men adored each other. Their affection went back some 50 years, maybe more, to a time when they were young enough to skip stones across the flat, gray water of Plymouth Bay, where they pretended to be Pilgrims and built forts in the dunes, fending off imaginary enemies with stick muskets. Over the years, they'd hunted and fished together, dated each other's sisters, been ushers at each UP FRONT>40

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other's weddings, and become godfathers to each other's sons.

"What do you mean, Ben kissed you?" Suddenly I was fully awake. I pictured her slapping him in response. That was something my mother might do. "What happened?"

"We took a walk after dinner, just the two of us, and he pulled me into him, like this." My mother crossed her arms around herself, simultaneously demonstrating Ben's caress and embracing its memory. Then she collapsed the rest of the way onto the bed, smiling, and stretched out alongside me.

"He wants me to meet him in New York next week. He has a board meeting, and Lily plans to stay in Plymouth. I don't know what to do."

We were lying on our backs, heat emanating from our bodies. "What do you think I should do?"

We both knew this was a rhetorical question. Malabar was a planner. She had already made up her mind.

"I'm going to need your help, sweetie," she said. "I need to figure out how to do this. How to make this possible."

I lay as still as a corpse, unsure of what to say. "Of course I don't want to hurt Charles. I'd rather die than cause him more grief. That's my top priority. Charles must never find out. He would be devastated." She paused as if to consider Charles one last time and then rolled onto her side to face me. "You have to help me, Rennie."

My mother needed me. I knew I was supposed to fill the space in the conversation, but the words weren't coming. I didn't know what to say.

"Aren't you happy for me, Rennie?" my mother asked, rising onto an elbow.

I looked at her face and into her eyes, dark and dewy with hope, and all at once, I was happy for her. And for me. Malabar was falling in love and she'd picked me as her confidante, a role I hadn't realized I'd longed for until that moment. Perhaps this could be a good thing. Maybe someone as vital as Ben could startle my mother out of the malaise she'd been in since Charles's strokes. Perhaps in the fall, when school started, my mother would get dressed for carpool. No more coat over her nightgown or sheet marks on her puffy morning face. Maybe she'd brush her hair, smear some gloss across her lips, and greet the children on our route with a cheery "Hello" like all of the other mothers.

"Of course I'm happy," I said. "I'm so happy for you." Her reaction—grateful tears—emboldened me. "After all you've been through, you deserve this," I told her.

"Sweetie, you can't tell anyone. Not a soul. Not your brother, not your father, not your friends. No one. This is serious. Promise me that, Rennie. You must take this secret to your grave."

I promised immediately, thrilled to have landed a starring role in my mother's drama.

The people who occupied the bedrooms around us—my brother Peter; my stepfather; Ben and his wife, Lily—were all peacefully asleep. They had no idea that the ground beneath them had shifted. My mother had narrowed her vision and chosen happiness, and I had willingly signed on, both of us ignoring the dangers of the new terrain.

When dawn spilled through my open windows and the sun climbed up and over the outer beach—that long spit of sand and dunes that separates our inlet from the Atlantic—the sky turned a brilliant fuchsia streaked with red.

Once I chose to follow my mother, there was no turning back. I became her protector and sentinel, always on the lookout for what might give her away.

I awoke fizzy with elation, buoyed by the joy in my mother's voice, still drunk on the intimacy of our exchange. Malabar had chosen me, and my body vibrated with an ineffable sense of opportunity.

My brother was already in the kitchen, hunched over a bowl of cereal, when I floated downstairs. Along the counter, half-empty glasses held the stale aroma of last night's wine. Peter had turned sixteen in June, had a separate apartment over the garage (a source of envy), owned his own boat (another), and already had an eye toward the person he planned to become.

Since our parents' divorce, a decade earlier, it had been the three of us: Mom, Peter, me. My father was on the sidelines, of course, occupying the every-other-weekend-and-alternating-holidays real estate, and my stepfather, Charles, was present, too, with his four grown children from his previous marriage, now my stepsiblings. But our fundamental family unit since the divorce had always been a triangle, that sturdy shape. Except on this morning, our geometry was changing. Before the end of the day, Peter's side would be cut loose, and once untethered from him, my mother and I would shape-shift into a single straight line, the most direct conduit for her secret.

IN CONFIDENCE
THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER, MALABAR, PHOTOGRAPHED IN 1951 IN NEW YORK CITY.

"Good morning," Malabar sang out, addressing no one in particular. She breezed into the kitchen wearing a cotton robe loosely belted over a sheer nightgown; her hair was tousled. It was a bit cooler this morning but still humid, and the sky, a swirl of purple-gray, promised the relief of rain. At the window on the far side of the kitchen, my mother caught her reflection and pursed her lips. In the cold light of day, she eyed the age spots scattered on her hands and the slack skin at the base of her neck, a nectarine a few days past perfect.

Still, she was lovely, slim and strong with shiny auburn hair that framed an alluring face with a dimple high on her left cheek, a mark left by forceps that was a reminder of her tough entry into this world. Although she cultivated an air of elegant aloofness, she was surprisingly game, willing to bait hooks and often the first to dive into rough waves. I know now she'd lost some essential piece of herself when she gave up her career as a journalist in New York City and opted for a gentler life and financial security by marrying Charles, who had family wealth. According to my father, my grandmother often

UP FRONT>44

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told Malabar, "You marry one man to have your children and another to take care of you in your old age." But if that had been my mother's intention, subconscious or otherwise, in marrying Charles, it was not working out as planned. Charles had made my mother wealthy, but after he had suffered a series of strokes, she was doing the lion's share of caregiving. Malabar would be 49 in the fall and no doubt felt despair over the unexpected changes in her life.

She raised her chin defiantly against her reflection, turned, and fixed on me a look that proved I hadn't dreamed the previous night's encounter.

"Young lady," she said, arching an eyebrow, "you and I have things to discuss later."

Peter shook his head, wondering what I'd done this time. He mimed a quick toke on a spliff. That it? His eyes twinkled.

After breakfast, I went upstairs to document the happenings of the previous 24 hours. I wrote for hours. When I finally returned downstairs, I saw that my mother needed my counsel. At a loss for how to move the game along with Ben, she solicited my help. *What do I do?* she mouthed. Outside, it was pouring, and inside, the grownups lounged listlessly, reading books and watching a tennis match.

She and I flitted from nook to nook, my mother telling me secrets that must have been a great relief for her to confess. In the window seat in her bedroom, she admitted that she'd been depressed for years. Had I known this? she asked. I knew she often had a hard time getting out of bed and that I had to beg her to brush the back of her hair, an unruly nest, for carpool. But like most children, I was self-absorbed, worried about my own friendships and crushes, and I hadn't been overly preoccupied with my mother's interior life. All I really wanted was to be assured that she loved me the most.

In the pantry, amid bottles of olive oil and cooking paraphernalia, Malabar confessed that after Charles's strokes, she'd felt she had no choice but to marry him. "Before he got sick, I'd never been so in love in all my life," she told me. "But none of the doctors could tell me if he'd ever be the same. He couldn't talk. They didn't know if he'd regain all his mental faculties, let alone his physical ones. He'd been so good to me and to you and Peter," she said, and she suddenly embraced me.

Our lives would have been so different had my mother not married Charles. We'd still be in our old apartment on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, spending summers in our tiny Cape cottage in Nauset Heights, where Peter and I shared a bedroom that my mother had to walk through to get to her own even smaller room. I've never been privy to my mother's finances—to this day, they are a mystery to me—but I can't imagine that she could have bought and renovated the large house we were in right now were it not for Charles's assistance.

FAMILY MATTERS
BRODEUR, AGE 12, PHOTOGRAPHED IN 1978 ON CAPE COD BY HER FATHER.

"Besides," she said, "we were already engaged." She picked at a hangnail on her ring finger until it bled. "Going ahead with the marriage was the only decent thing to do."

That was the first time I understood that she'd considered other options. Later, she took my hands, averted her eyes as if holding on to some lingering sense of maternal propriety, and said, "Rennie, Charles has been more child than husband since his strokes. If you get my meaning."

I did. At various times during that day and during the weeks, months, and years to come, my brother would walk by and see us in solemn discussion. He would slow, waiting for an invitation from one of us to join in these conspicuous conversations. It had always been us three, after all. Before Ben's kiss, Peter's opinion was as valued as mine. But now our mother would abruptly stop talking and regard her son with impatience and a look that said, *Is there something you need?* The sting of rejection would cross Peter's face—easier for me to remember now than to see at the time—and he would move on.

"What's up with you two?" he asked us on that first day when my mother and I were cloistered in the pantry. He hated being excluded.

"Oh, it's nothing, really," I assured him. "Boy problems. Trust me, you'd be bored."

From here on out, I would be lying to him.

The sun finally pushed through the sky in broad columns of slanted light. The tide was dead low, that still hour that marks the sea's withdrawal and illuminates the teeming life beneath the surface of our bay: moon snails pushing plowlike across the sandy bottom, horseshoe crabs coupling, schools of minnows moving in perfect synchronicity. As the procession of sunbeams merged into one, the day became long with light, and a space in my mind opened like that between a boat and a dock.

I grabbed a wire bucket that we kept in the outdoor shower, opened one of the sliding glass doors, and stuck my head inside. "Who wants to go clamming?" I asked.

Lily and Charles looked up from their books, smiled lazily, and demurred. But Ben rose quickly, as I knew he would, eager to be active. The man could not sit still for long. My mother regarded me with more gratitude than I'd thought possible but remained in her chair. She would need, I understood, public convincing.

Did it occur to me then that I was betraying Charles, who had always been gentle and kind to Peter and me and whom I loved? If it did, I pushed the thought away. All I knew at that moment was I felt lucky. My mother had chosen me, and, together, we were embarking on a great adventure. □

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 *All names except those of Malabar and the author have been changed.

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Jorja On My Mind

Dior's new global makeup ambassador is a burgeoning R&B superstar with something to say.

BEAUTY Jorja Smith is feeling a bit under the weather. "I thought I was going to be OK, so I apologize," she laments to the crowd at this year's Governors Ball Music Festival inside Randall's Island Park. But a summer cold is no match for the celestial falsetto of the Grammy-nominated R&B star, who has taken to the stage in a burnt-orange leather crop top and metallic trousers, with coral-tinted eyelids to match. Smith unleashes her lush, velvety vocals, seamlessly crooning the songs on her debut album, *Lost & Found* (2018)—including "Blue Lights," the politically charged single that launched her career.

Forty-eight hours later and Smith is still in the throes of the bug, she says, intermittently humming along BEAUTY>50

TWIRL POWER
A DEMURE JORJA SMITH IN A DIOR DRESS AND NECKLACE. PHOTOGRAPHED BY TINA TYRELL. FASHION EDITOR: ANNA SCHIFFEL.

HAIR, ZATEESHA BARBOUR; MAKEUP, COURTNEY PERKINS. PRODUCED BY ARC PRODUCTIONS.

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to Frank Ocean's breezy "Pink + White," which is playing in the background of a cavernous Brooklyn photo studio. Congestion and all, her complexion remains inconceivably poreless. "My relationship to beauty has always been a bit confused," admits the new Dior makeup ambassador. "I didn't ever think I'd be the face of anything," says the 22-year-old, who grew up in Walsall, West Midlands, with a British mother and a father of Jamaican descent. "At school, the majority of the girls were white and slim with long hair, so that's what I wanted to look like." Learning to embrace her hourglass figure and pillowy pout, however—while nurturing a raw talent that saw her write her first song when she was just 11 years old—has helped the London-based singer earn international attention not just from designers such as Maria Grazia Chiuri, who designed three custom Dior gowns with Smith for her performance at the Guggenheim International Gala, but from Kendrick Lamar. And Bruno Mars. And Drake, who reached out to Smith on Instagram two years ago to ask her to be a part of his *More Life* mixtape.

"There's something new happening. Everything is being celebrated. Everyone is beautiful"

"There's something new that's happening now," Smith continues of the cultural landscape. "Everything is being celebrated—different looks, hair, and bodies. Everyone is beautiful," she explains, nodding to a long-overdue, industry-wide pivot toward broader representation that makes her more than just an ambassador for primers and foundation. "She's a role model for women around the world," says Peter Philips, creative and image director for Dior Makeup, who has already begun working closely with Smith to expand her face-painting repertoire. "I'm definitely getting experimental with color and doing more with my eyes," she promises. Fans who witnessed the Toronto finale of Smith's recent North American co-headlining tour with Colombian-American artist Kali Uchis—a girls-only bill that made a powerful statement about who can sell tickets in a male-dominated genre—likely noticed this evolution when she sported a rusty wash of eye shadow and a matte brick-red lip to cover Erykah Badu's "On & On" with Uchis. "But skin is my main thing," she insists. "As long as my skin looks natural, we can play with the rest."

Smith will have plenty of opportunities to get creative as she braces to release her first music since *Lost & Found,* which made her something of a red-carpet fixture on the awards circuit. "She can wear streetwear and she can wear gowns," the designer Olivier Rousteing said of dressing Smith for the Grammys in a gold, curve-hugging custom Balmain dress. "You cannot put Jorja in a box." It's an apt description of what to expect from her impact on the beauty world, and her new material. "I can't wait to put it out," she says of the songs she's been writing over the last two years while ruminating on growing up with the scrutiny of fame. "This is a new chapter."—**LAUREN VALENTI**

Life in Color

The exuberant canvases of Sam Gilliam unfold at Dia:Beacon.

ART In the late 1960s, **Sam Gilliam** began filling rooms with massive lengths of unprimed canvas, soaked and stained in riotous hues and slung from walls and ceilings in site-specific combinations. Soon enough, Gilliam realized if he wanted to make a living—with three children, he had to—it would behoove him to work on a more collector-friendly scale. Thus evolved the draped paintings for which the artist, 85, is now best known: comparatively small derivations of the same idea that could be displayed alone against a wall.

Lately, though, a surge of interest in his career—Gilliam jokes by phone from his D.C. studio about his "rediscovery"—has led to opportunities to revisit the earlier work. This month, the painter takes over a gallery at Dia:Beacon with two of his massive drapes, both created in 1969 as part of his *Carousel* series.

A WRINKLE IN TIME
SPREAD, BY SAM GILLIAM, 1973.

It's a new mash-up of old work, installed, says Courtney J. Martin, who curated the show, to make the viewer feel as if she's "walking into the painting."

The Dia collection, with its focus on minimalist and conceptual work from the '60s and '70s, provides an opportunity to showcase the artist alongside his generational peers—many of whom achieved the kind of mainstream success that eluded Gilliam for decades. (It's easy enough to surmise why: He's black, resisted pressure to make representational, socially conscious art, and lived a couple hundred miles from the art world's beating heart.) "This was a collection that Sam could have been in," says Martin. Arriving there now "feels great," attests the artist. He cites Rothko, Newman, Pollock, and de Kooning, pioneers of abstraction who forged their own path, going out on a limb before spaces existed to exhibit their work. "There's a film called *Field of Dreams,*" Gilliam says. "If I make it, they will come. It's about optimism."—**JULIA FELSENTHAL**

SAM GILLIAM. *SPREAD*, 1973. ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 69 X 113 1/2 X 1 3/4 IN. PHOTO: FREDRIK NILSEN STUDIO COURTESY OF DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY, LOS ANGELES.

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Cult of Khaite

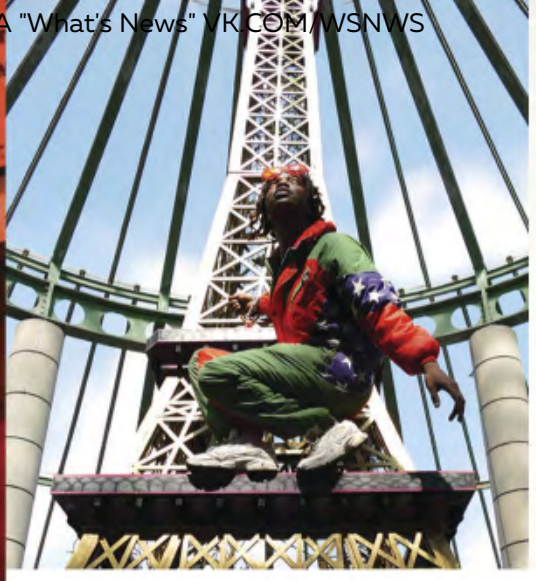
Already strong on cyber-appeal, the young brand is even more chic IRL.

FASHION Catherine Holstein likes to say that Khaite, the brand she launched in New York in 2016, isn't actually a brand at all: "It's a breath, a feeling, an emotion." It's also a raging success, and has been from the very start. Before she sold a single pair of jeans, with their elevating enamel button, or one lofty cashmere sweater, Holstein started an Instagram account, and its inspired mix of 1990s magazine editorials, old movie stills, and Cecily Brown and Marlene Dumas paintings soon had Net-a-Porter and MatchesFashion emailing her for appointments.

Holstein wasn't exactly an unknown quantity. Barneys picked up her Parsons School of Design junior thesis collection, and she went on to sell at Lane Crawford, Isetan, and 40 other global accounts before working in the design studios at 3x1, The Gap, Vera Wang, Maiyet, and The Elder Statesman, where she honed her point of view on denim and knitwear (which she calls the pillars of the modern woman's wardrobe, alongside distinctive poplin shirting). But more than her design background—she grew up between Southern California and London, by the way—it's FASHION>54

FELLOW FEELING
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: EMILY BLUNT, AMANDLA STENBERG, POPPY DELEVINGNE, LAURA HARRIER, EMILY RATAJKOWSKI, LILY JAMES, AND LILY ALDRIDGE—ALL WEARING KHAITE—ARE JUST A FEW OF THE BRAND'S ELEGANT ADHERENTS.

BLUNT: ANDREW H. WALKER/SHUTTERSTOCK; STENBERG: FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES; DELEVINGNE: JOHN SHEENE/ACE PICTURES/SHUTTERSTOCK; HARRIER: MATT BARON/SHUTTERSTOCK; RATAJKOWSKI: BROADIMAGE/SHUTTERSTOCK; JAMES: DAVID M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES; ALDRIDGE: JB LACROIX/WIREIMAGE.



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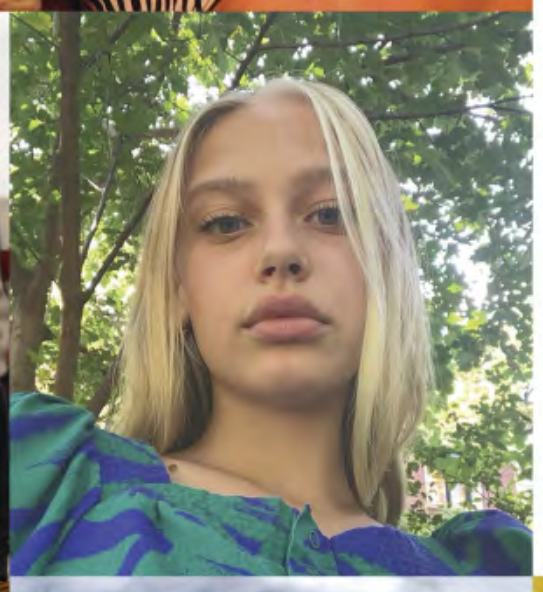

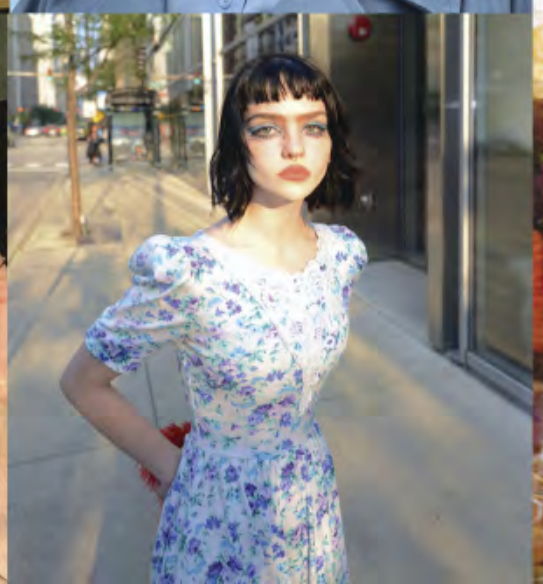

the everyday luxuries she's producing that have won Khaite so many followers so quickly. Holstein, now 35, "totally single" (she says, laughing) and living in a small apartment off Washington Square Park, calls them "cherished items" rather than basics or essentials because, she says, "I don't want them to be disposable."

Despite her myriad commitments to the brand—she's both creative director and interim CEO—Holstein still handles Khaite's Instagram account. Her only rule is to post once a day—otherwise, she says, "it's all instinct, no strategy." But Khaite is no longer an "Instagram brand." Holstein put on her first show for fall 2019 in February—the yellow leaves on the runway were inspired by her walks through her neighborhood. "I started feeling like New York had an exciting pulse again," she said, singling out other young brands like Eckhaus Latta and Bode. "You see a lot of Europe referencing New York right now, though I don't think the world quite realizes it. It felt like our duty to contribute in some way."

The pressure of the catwalk had her tinkering a bit with the Khaite formula. (The tulle princess gowns were certainly new, and fall saw the launch of handbag and shoe collections.) But "I'm still the customer," she says, "and it's still an open-mic forum around here. I'll ask everybody—the women in the office and my friends: 'Do you want it?' 'Would you wear it everyday?' Anything you would admire but not pick up—those are the things I don't want in the collection."

She's about to open a showroom where online customers can get acquainted with the Khaite feeling one-on-one. The space will also be a testing ground for her first brick-and-mortar store, slated to open soon in New York. "Khaite is a downtown brand," she says, but the collection is resonating far beyond lower Manhattan. Michelle Obama, Lady Gaga, Emily Blunt, and Amandla Stenberg have all been spotted in Khaite.

> Holstein calls Khaite's pieces "cherished items" rather than basics

Tory Burch became a mentor of sorts before Khaite launched. "Catherine sees the strength in simplicity—great denim, classic shirting," she says. "It's refreshing to see such refinement in American sportswear." Holstein, for her part, relates to how Burch broke the mold. "She's great at saying, 'Continue doing what you're doing and don't let anybody tell you not to,' " Holstein says.

There's little risk of that. The Khaite "feeling" that Holstein's always talking about? She describes it as a kind of strong femininity. "The biggest trigger to me," Holstein says, "is when you say, 'Oh, you can't do that.' My strength comes from my independence."—**NICOLE PHELPS**

NOTHING BUT BLUE SKIES TE KAHU VILLA IN NEW ZEALAND.

House Rich

From historic villas to skyscraper penthouses, Airbnb just got a lot more luxurious.

TRAVEL Airbnb's origin story is the stuff of Silicon Valley lore: In 2007, a design conference came to San Francisco. Sensing an opportunity to make some extra cash, Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia blew up three air mattresses and advertised their quarters to attendees in search of accommodations. Now, with the recent launch of Airbnb Luxe, they're moving beyond their inflatable-furniture days.

"It's five-star everything," says Chesky of the 2,000 tony properties he has added to Airbnb's listings. If the original platform allows travelers to experience life like a local in an Echo Park bungalow, Airbnb Luxe now shoots them straight to Malibu's Billionaire's Beach. To qualify, rentals must pass a rigorous 300-point screening; a favorable champagne flute–to–guest ratio, electric-car charger ports, and panoramic ocean views all help a property raise its score. A few addresses that made the cut: The Fleming Villa, the Jamaican beachfront retreat where Ian Fleming dreamed up James Bond; a Cannes château with a three-story chandelier; and a French Polynesian island so private it operates in its own time zone. The other Luxe properties extend from Belize to Bali, Sydney to Santorini, Anguilla to the Amalfi Coast and dozens of additional destinations. For those reluctant to embrace the sharing-economy platform for its lack of concierge, all Airbnb Luxe rentals come with "trip designers." Call on them to organize a last-minute Pilates session, a Napa wine tour, or even, should the mood strike, a wedding. Their purpose, as Chesky tells it, is to create "magical travel moments."

With all of Airbnb's expansion, a vacation seems a ways off for the cofounder. But if he does find the time, he already has his house picked out: Te Kahu Villa, a secluded 50-acre estate on the shores of Lake Wanaka, New Zealand. Even techies need to unplug.—**ELISE TAYLOR**

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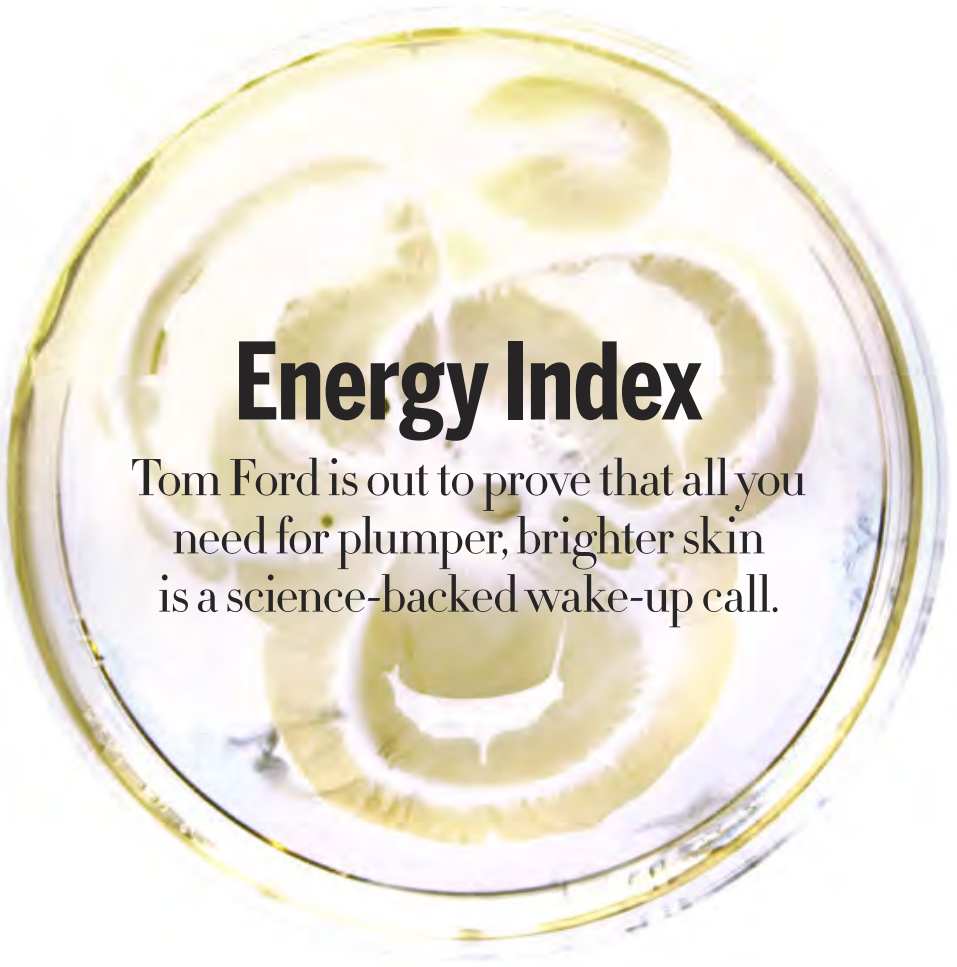

Energy Index

Tom Ford is out to prove that all you need for plumper, brighter skin is a science-backed wake-up call.

BEAUTY "You can't trust a dermatologist who says you have to come in for Botox every three months," Tom Ford declares on an early summer morning in Los Angeles, referring to his staunchly held belief that it's required only every eight. "I need to be able to move my face!" insists the designer, who has been interested in skin care since, as a teenager, he watched the legendary talk-show host Merv Griffin discuss his collagen injections on air. Ford has other strong feelings about the state of beauty. Bewilderment at these "pumped-up butt implants"; curiosity about how one can be aroused by breasts that are essentially "two bags of saline"; and a blunt meditation on hyper-manicured eyebrows: "Personally, I find it a little frightening," the 57-year-old says, sipping a half-decaf, half-caf iced coffee out of a matte black travel mug with a matching straw—one of four he'll consume that day.

A work-obsessed vegan who doesn't drink or smoke, Ford is fueled largely by caffeine. "You need caffeine as a stimulant—it wakes you up," he explains, detailing the hero ingredient around which he has developed his first skin-care line, Tom Ford Research. "It's a stimulant for your face in the same way that it is for your body." The fashion luminary turned Oscar-nominated filmmaker turned beauty mogul is something of a poster boy for constant stimulation, a multitasker nonpareil who recently added chairman of the CFDA to his illustrious list of titles. Debuting a range of complexion products, however, was not a process he rushed. "I'm not impressed by the creams and serums on the luxury market," he says with his signature blend of candor and politesse. "So I thought, Why can't someone combine a prescription-level product with the delivery system of a luxury one?"

Years ago, a dermatologist suggested Ford depuff his eyes by pressing wet tea bags over the lids. "It's an amazing old trick," he confirms. So he asked a team of scientists at Estée Lauder, which produces his popular makeup brand, to figure out exactly how the magic happened. For three years, they investigated, testing 75 caffeine-focused skin-care formulations and eventually publishing research with the American Academy of Dermatology in 2018 that explores how caffeine increases energy on a cellular and molecular level, which can have an effect on skin brightness and hydration.

Using the same discernment with which he pinpoints wrinkles (he has very few), Ford's edited two-piece skin-care line—a fast-absorbing Serum and rich Crème Concentrate, out this month—was formulated with potent and highly scrutinized ingredients: Pure caffeine is combined with a rare strain of Peruvian white porcelain cacao that contains polyphenols, the compound that defends the skin against free-radical damage, and a prized Japanese green tea. "What we're actually doing is accelerating cell turnover—not just on the surface but on a deeper level," the designer explains, throwing out words like "glycolic acid," an exfoliating ingredient in the serum, and "hyaluronic acid," a hydrating ingredient in the cream, like a seasoned pro. "The cream also has the highest level of retinol possible that doesn't make your skin turn red," Ford reveals of the collagen- and elastin-building powerhouse.

He uses the cream daily after cleansing and before applying Tom Ford Men's Bronzing Gel atop an SPF 30 he is currently developing to round out the line, which is proudly unisex. "There are cultures now where men are not even remotely ashamed of wearing makeup," notes Ford, whose line of men's eyebrow gels, concealers, and his signature bronzer predates the current cachet for gender-fluid marketing. Good skin, he suggests, is just good skin. And who doesn't want that?—**MOLLY CREEDEN**

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Bust and Boom

The age of bras that thrust and pinch is over: Today's lingerie brands don't only fit better—they feel better, too.

WHAT LIES BENEATH
AMBER VALLETTA, PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVEN MEISEL, *VOGUE*, 2002.

FASHION Around Memorial Day, 2011, I realized I had a bra problem. I was headed to London for the summer, and the mini-move entailed a radical wardrobe edit—I was adamant I'd pack only things that I genuinely loved and regularly wore, and nothing in my overstuffed lingerie drawer fit the bill. I had flimsy, candy-colored "sexy" bras that were impractical to wear. I had T-shirt bras with heavy molded cups that I wore but devoutly despised because they made me feel like I had a pair of dirigibles strapped to my chest. There were latter-day versions of the legendary WonderBra that seemed to set my breasts on a platter and offer them to the world as a gift. And then—my secret favorite—I had a comfy, tank-style Jockey sports bra that did absolutely nothing for my tits. How is it possible, I wondered, that capitalism had yet to provide me with copious options for bras that I did not hate?

Lo these many years later, capitalism has come through. Women are living in an entirely different universe of underpinnings than they were just a few years ago. The sports bra I own now is a hoisting, stabilizing feat of German engineering made by the brand Anita, and I would never in a million years think to use it for anything but running, because my lingerie drawer is now filled with bras that are chic, gently supportive, and featherweight—to wit the wire-free, micromesh bralette by New York City–based brand Negative Underwear, one of several newcomers to the lingerie marketplace, that I'm wearing as I write this.

"We looked around at the fashion we loved, which was all very minimal—brands like The Row, and Céline when Phoebe Philo was designing it—and it just didn't seem like there was a bra for the woman buying those clothes," explains Negative's cofounder Marissa Vosper about the impetus for the brand's launch a few years ago.

Negative's debut followed on the heels of ThirdLove, the popular direct-to-consumer lingerie brand that offers simple styles in a dazzling array of sizes, and it's been followed by the launch of other labels with a similar remit. Not coincidentally, many of these brands were founded or cofounded by women. Cuup, launched in November, is typical in that its products reflect the simple goal articulated by cofounder Abby Morgan. "I wanted to embrace my natural shape," she says.

"More often than not, the ideal breast is an invented breast," wrote science columnist Natalie Angier in *Woman: An Intimate Geography,* published in 1999. "Breasts vary in size and shape to an outlandish degree, but they can be whipped into an impressive conformity." The striking thing about the new, minimalist lingerie brands is that they aren't really offering a silhouette proposition—they provide a range of styles meant to enhance women's genetically determined breasts rather than sculpt them to match a culturally ordained ideal. You can see the same kind of shift in the move toward shapewear that smooths rather than suctions, like that made by cult-favorite brand Yummie.

"When you look at a push-up bra now, it looks so . . . foreign," says superstylist Mel Ottenberg, who has worked with Rihanna, among others. "Like, it used to seem so normal, and now cool girls are wearing Baserange and it's all totally unstructured. You just don't want—or need—that kind of lift if you're wearing Erdem or Loewe or Valentino."

Is it possible that our POV on bras and breasts is undergoing one of those cyclical readjustments, as when women in the 1960s took a hard look at their pointy bullet bras and thought, *To hell with this*? That's how I feel when I look back at the famous WonderBra ad from 1994 with Eva Herzigova staring gleefully down at her bolstered breasts next to the tagline HELLO BOYS. Pardon me for believing that a bra ought to be made for the people wearing it—not some hypothetical male gaze.

"If you look back, the idea of 'sexy' wasn't owned by women so much," says Cuup's Morgan. "Whereas now it's more about sensuality and how a woman *feels*."

If you had to isolate the moment when this pivot began, it would be sometime in 2013. That year, the *Victoria's Secret Fashion Show* was watched live by an astounding 9.7 million people in the U.S.; one month later, ThirdLove launched. Earlier this year, Victoria's Secret's FASHION>64

parent company announced that it would no longer be airing a fashion show on network television. Increasingly, it seems that pinup femininity, and the lingerie abetting it, is becoming passé. Technology has fostered the change, with startups and heritage brands alike seeking out high-performance fabrications and investing in new technologies that create a gossamer lingerie architecture. ThirdLove's T-shirt bra is made with a lightweight memory foam that molds to the breast's natural shape; Wolford, a lingerie-department stalwart, has developed a system of 3-D silicone printing that replaces wires and seams with nearly invisible contouring—its 3W line, produced with the technology, has been a blockbuster hit with customers. "Fifty percent of them leave the store in the 3W bra they tried on," reports Wolford's Robyn Breighner.

Fit is another area that has witnessed rapid advancement. New brands are encouraging women to rethink bra sizing, clueing them in to the fact that, for decades, we've been contorting ourselves into the relatively few sizes available. (After years of buying 34C bras, I left a fitting at the Cuup showroom convinced I was a 32D—or, in one style, a 32E.) "Bras are complex to make," notes Cuup CEO Kearnon O'Molony. "For a long time, manufacturers were getting away with forcing women to work around a small range of sizes because no one was challenging them. The question we were asking was, How do you make a great-looking bra where the experience is the same for the 32B as for the 38E?"

Whether their breasts are large or small, perky or teardrop-shaped, women are demanding the kind of barely there brassieres that were once the exclusive province of the flat-chested—and in some cases they're just demanding more options, period. Model Ashley Graham, who has launched her own line of larger-size bras for the brand Addition Elle, sees this demand for more and better options as closely connected to the body-positivity movement she's helped spearhead.

"It's contributed to a societal shift toward authenticity and acceptance, empowering more women to celebrate their bodies rather than feeling like we need to conform to a certain size or shape to be included," Graham says. "Customers are no longer just purchasing—they're participating."

And, it turns out, when women chime in with their demands for better bras, they get ones they don't hate—that are sleek and functional and made for them, rather than furbelow-trimmed and made to induce *Faster, Pussycat!* proportions. For some women, of course, that pneumatic look retains its appeal—and that's fine, so long as other women have the freedom to choose something else.

"Having more choice has allowed women to make a choice," says ThirdLove cofounder and co-CEO Heidi Zak. "Every woman has a bra story, and they always think: *Oh, my God, what's wrong with me? My body's so weird.* It's never just you! It's just, until recently, that's how bra-shopping made you feel—that you were supposed to be some other way. Now, finally, that's changed."—**MAYA SINGER**

DESIGN

A Different Stripe

In the 19th century, the Danish king Frederick VI decreed a hefty tax on imported glass goods, spurring a local industry for tumblers and vases that put a Scandi minimalist spin on famous Murano techniques. Two centuries later, the tiny port town of Ebeltoft still lures glass-hunting tourists—while 26 years ago, it served as the training grounds for designer Chris Taylor. "I have clear memories of going to work in the dark at 10:00 in the morning," he says of his life in the northern town. In 2014, he debuted his Providence, Rhode Island–based line, Craft Advisory, and he's since built a steady following for his collection. His works—produced exclusively by hand—"revere tradition but also deviate and kind of poke a little bit at it," he says. Craft Advisory's octagonal glasses, for example, are striped with colors so opaque, they intentionally evoke plastic. "I have to bring out shards to convince people they're glass!" says Taylor.—**LILAH RAMZI**

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BEHIND THE LOOK

Fine Feather

"It evokes the glamour and exuberance of what fashion can be," says designer Prabal Gurung of a campy feathered dress worn by Naomi Campbell at Yves Saint Laurent's fall 1987 couture show. That flight of fancy was the jumping-off point for this business-up-top, party-on-the-bottom jumpsuit, which was recently taken for a spin around Manhattan by Yara Shahidi. (The color is inspired by handwoven baskets crafted by Rana Tharu artisans in Gurung's native Nepal.) "I absolutely love this look on Yara," Gurung gushes. So do we.—LILAH RAMZI

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ETHICALLY SOURCED OSTRICH PLUMES WERE HAND-APPLIED.

WOVEN WORK
THE DESIGNER LOOKED TO GRASS BASKETS CRAFTED BY NEPALESE RANA THARU ARTISANS.

SPIRIT ANIMAL
GURUNG CHANNELED THE FANTASY OF THIS 1987 YSL COUTURE LOOK.

LOVE STORIES
SARAH JESSICA PARKER AND CHRIS NOTH, PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ FOR *VOGUE*, 2008.

Mating Games

Two new books talk about sex, baby.

BOOKS If, to go by think pieces and surveys of millennials, America is in the midst of a sex recession, where does that leave our most intimate desires—the ones W. H. Auden described "as crooked as corkscrews"? Nowhere near straightened out, as Lisa Taddeo illustrates in her potent and provocative work of narrative nonfiction, **Three Women** (Avid Reader Press). The result of eight years of reporting, Taddeo's book braids together the accounts of a trio of American women who were willing to give the author untrammeled access to their intimate thoughts . Although the book has a clear objective—to examine the private lives of modern women—Taddeo does not muscle her three narratives into the service of a single thesis. Bit by bit, she shades in the women's emotional and family histories, illuminating how deprivations of the past can mutate into new hungers.

Perhaps no one has better excavated our kinky underpinnings than Candace Bushnell, author of the original "Sex and the City" columns and progenitor of the show that made Manolo a household name. Fifteen years after Carrie Bradshaw sighed her last "I couldn't help but wonder," Bushnell is back with **Is There Still Sex in the City?** (Grove Press). The protagonist, Candace, is a recently divorced writer who trades her Manhattan life for a cottage in the Hamptons. The loosely assembled chronicle of her midlife dating and mating is brimming with the snappy rhetorical questions and taxonomic acronyms that became Bushnell's signature back in the stiletto days ("MNBs" are My New Boyfriends; "MAM" is the Middle-Aged Madness that awaits every former party girl). While Carrie was a bright-eyed anthropologist, Candace and her friends are survivalists; even beyond the City, it's a jungle out there. —LAUREN MECHLING

History Girl

Aisling Franciosi stars in Jennifer Kent's astonishing sophomore feature, a period piece with the immediacy of a thriller.

FRESH AS A DAISY
FRANCIOSI WEARS AN HERMÈS SWEATER. PHOTOGRAPHED BY TINA TYRELL. FASHION EDITOR: ANNA SCHIFFEL.

TALENT Aisling Franciosi doesn't look like the type to keep a journal, an activity often associated with introverted adolescents. But sitting across from me at a downtown New York restaurant, sleek and composed in a white T-shirt and black pants, the 28-year-old Irish-Italian actor insists she is. Aisling (pronounced *ASH-ling*) keeps a work journal, a chronicle of her roles and auditions. "If I'm feeling anxious," Franciosi tells me, "it's good to look back and realize that this is just one of the troughs." She likes to keep the journal unemotional, but there are exceptions. The day Britain woke up to the news that Brexit had passed, she got a call offering her the lead in Jennifer Kent's *The Nightingale* (the director's follow-up to the highly acclaimed *Babadook*). She granted that news an entire, exuberant page.

In *The Nightingale,* out this month, Franciosi plays Clare, a 21-year-old Irish convict indentured to a British lieutenant in Tasmania in the 1820s. Rendering this brutal period of the country's history means rendering the countless victims of the colonial project, and the film does this relentlessly. "You should feel something if you see it," Franciosi says. *The Nightingale* is a movie about cyclical trauma, and Clare is the wheel that rolls through it all, Franciosi's virtuosic performance hitting every emotional note: tenderness, terror, resolve, resentment, and rage.

When Franciosi auditioned for the part, in 2016, her biggest credits included a rebellious teenager obsessed with a serial killer (played by Jamie Dornan) in the TV series *The Fall* and a two-minute bit as Jon Snow's dying mother in *Game of Thrones.* In the audition tape she sent Kent, Franciosi sang the Irish song "Siúil Á Run"—the very song, incidentally, that Kent had slated for a climactic TALENT>72

HAIR, BRAYDON NELSON; MAKEUP, COURTNEY PERKINS. PRODUCED BY ARC PRODUCTIONS. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE SUNVIEW LUNCHEONETTE. DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE.

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moment in her film. "As soon as I saw her," Kent tells me, "I got that feeling I get when I know that I'm looking at the one." Without a celebrity lead, however, securing funding for the film took time. "We could have chosen a more famous actor," Kent says, "but I wanted to choose the right actor. Now that the film is finished, everyone is saying, 'Who is this person? Where did she come from?' "

The answer is complicated. Franciosi's dad is a heart surgeon in Milan, and her mom is a retired teacher in Dublin, where Franciosi was born. She spent the first four years of her life in Milan and then moved back to Dublin with her mom and older brothers when her parents separated. In the same way that Americans send their kids to Saturday soccer practice, the Irish enroll their wee ones in drama classes. After her first class, at the age of six, "I went to my mom and said, 'I'm going to be an actor,' " Franciosi tells me. "She said, 'Yeah, sure.' But I'm pretty good at sticking with things." (For a scene in *The Nightingale,* for instance, she swam in a frigid river until she fainted.)

At Trinity College Dublin, Franciosi strategically majored in French and Spanish. "I love communication and miscommunication" and "well-structured sentences," she tells me. "I'm not snobby, but I love getting it right." But, more important, as someone already fluent in three languages (Italian, English, and Irish), she knew it wouldn't be hard for her to pick up a couple more. Meanwhile, she was moonlighting at the Cork Opera House and Dublin's Gate Theatre, and in March 2012, she was cast in *The Fall.* Her grades were good, but halfway through her final year, the school gave her an ultimatum: school or acting. It was an easy choice, even if she was within striking distance of a diploma. She's been told she's welcome to return. "The plan is that if I don't need to, I won't," she says, chuckling.

> "I would like to be considered an actor, first and foremost, rather than a starlet or a celebrity"

In October she moved to Tribeca and began acting in a limited series for HBO, *I Know This Much Is True.* (At home, she and her Calabrian boyfriend speak and cook Italian together. They recently bought a pasta maker: "You can freeze ravioli!") But it's been "a weird year workwise," she says, because she's mindful of what she does next. "I would like to be considered an actor, first and foremost, rather than a starlet or a celebrity." That has meant turning down lucrative projects that didn't resonate with her. "It's a gut decision," she says. In the meantime, she's busy exploring New York, often by foot, on either an epic walk or a run (an exercise-lover, she forced herself to stick with running, her least favorite sport, until, ultimately, she began to love it). Shortly after leaving the café, she spots McNally Jackson Books. "Oh, that looks cute!" she says, pulling out her phone and—ever the curious chronicler—adding it to the robust list of places she'd like to visit.—**FRANCESCA MARI**

Base Jump

BEAUTY I am not the target demographic for a tinted moisturizer. I cling to full-coverage foundation to mask hyperpigmentation and late nights; anything in which words such as *natural* figure prominently just feels too risky. The onetime outlier on my vanity was Laura Mercier's ubiquitous tinted moisturizer, which I used regularly before committing to a steady diet of primer, foundation, and color correctors. The daily essential Meghan Markle has credited for her "dewy glow" has long been a makeup-artist favorite. "When I started, it was such a revolutionary product," says Monika Blunder, the woman responsible for the lit-from-within complexions of Gemma Chan and Amanda Seyfried. A fan since its launch in 1996, Blunder recalls the original as the first sheer base to align with her skin-first aesthetic. "When things are too matte or plastered on, I just lose interest."

She has a point. The arrival of makeup-melting warmer weather left me wondering if my full-coverage formulas had lulled me into a false state of security, the equivalent of a cosmetic Snapchat filter. So I was delighted to learn that Mercier's original lightweight cream was getting an update this month, reformulated with hydrating macadamia-nut oil and vitamin-rich kukui seed, plus an expanded range of 20 shades. I decided to bring it back into rotation. The subtle finish discreetly evened things out, a humbling experience that required a mental shift: Baring your skin means baring your soul, or at least becoming comfortable with the idea that perceived imperfections aren't necessarily a bad thing. Blunder's advice for foundation junkies looking to make the transition? Use a dampened sponge to buff out the coverage. But don't be afraid to finger paint, she advises, "so you can see the luminosity—and life—in your skin."—**JANELLE OKWODU**

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L'ORÉAL PARIS

The PRESENT *is* FEMALE

There's a paradigm shift in the fashion industry—a cadre of women designers of all generations rethinking standard practices, designing with intuition and feeling, and putting human values first. By Sarah Mower. Photographed by Zoë Ghertner.

A female culture runs far and wide across the landscape of 21st-century fashion. It's there at the top of the canopy, in major Parisian houses; it pervades the uprising of young, self-made independents and generations of established entrepreneurs: a multifaceted critical mass of women steadily working to change an industry for the better. What's remarkable is the way they talk about feeling, their agile ability to intuit the time we live in, and their quiet but steady turning of the fashion world toward the overthrow of bad and old institutional behaviors.

I was working at my first job in New York when Donna Karan launched Seven Easy Pieces, her inspirationally efficient wardrobe that heralded the rise of the '80s power woman and the first wave of consciously feminist fashion. Nothing was more thrilling than her have-it-all idea that executive women could smash the glass ceilings of corporate America, and seeing her advertising campaign with Rosemary McGrotha being sworn in as president showed us—nearly 30 years ago—that everything should be imaginable for us.

Still, what we never reckoned with then was the notion that the achievement of women designers today would amount to a reshaping of the industry—not by fitting in with male-led corporate rules but by steadily ignoring them, trusting their own instincts, living how they wish, and opening wide the creative space for a whole generation to thrive.

This new normalization of visibility includes women leading major houses, from Maria Grazia Chiuri at Christian Dior and Clare Waight Keller at Givenchy to Sarah Burton at Alexander McQueen and Virginie Viard at Chanel. Innumerable major women leaders, meanwhile, have succeeded by doing things in their own ways: Miuccia Prada, Rei Kawakubo, Vivienne Westwood, Donatella Versace, Vera Wang, Alberta Ferretti, and many more.

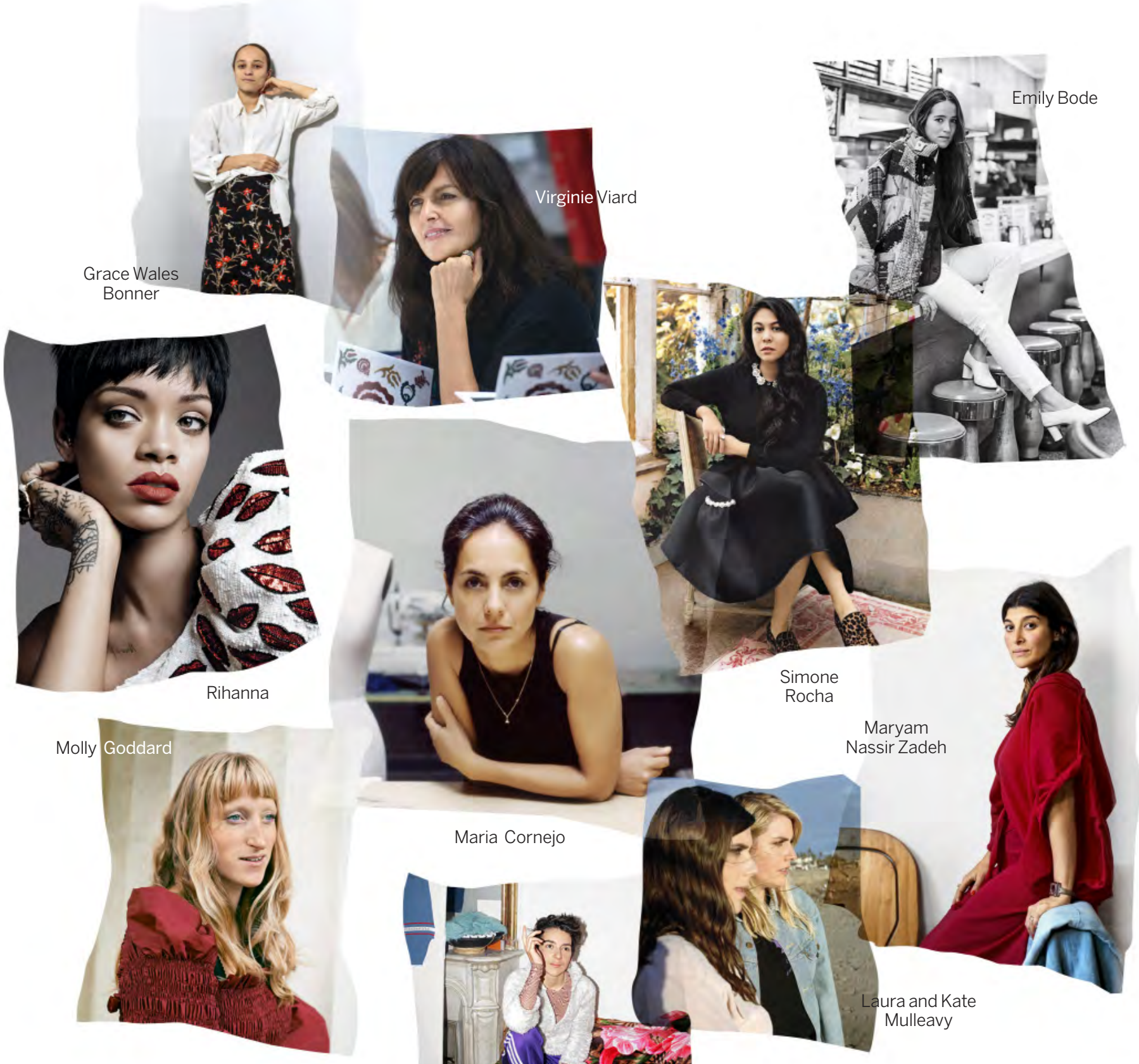
Yet progress today can hardly be quantified as linear, up-the-ladder stuff. It's gyrating around whole new axes of celebrity and social media. Doors to the luxury-fashion fortress that didn't even exist a decade ago are now being stepped through by female upstarts from everywhere in the digital age—including those who've credibly switched to fashion from acting and music careers: first the Olsen twins, then Victoria Beckham, and now Rihanna, the first black woman to have a label backed by LVMH.

Women are taking the freedom to toot their horns on media platforms—or to stay private and silent—as they wish. You won't find holiday selfies

CHECKED IN

FROM FAR LEFT: Model Amber Valletta in **Simone Rocha**'s romanticized double trench coat ($4,650; Simone Rocha, NYC). Model Fran Summers in **Bode**'s upcycled patchwork jacket ($2,300) and pants ($1,390; mrporter.com). Model Anok Yai in a **Versace** check harness dress ($3,625) layered over a ribbed knit top ($400) and lace-trimmed slip skirt ($1,125; all at select Versace stores). Model Vittoria Ceretti wears an **Etro** check blazer ($3,115; modaoperandi.com) as a dress. Model Liu Wen in a **Marine Serre** jacket and skirt (matchesfashion.com).

Fashion Editor: Camilla Nickerson.



on Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen's Instagram for The Row—only serene clothes sparingly juxtaposed with pictures of art. At the other end of the spectrum, Beckham—a duck to water with publicity since her music-industry beginnings—jumps at the chance to share her life on Instagram. "In the past, the only me that people saw was what the media showed," she says. "Now you see me on the school run, in the studio, as a wife, a businesswoman—women relate to that."

Younger women in particular seem to take these freedoms, including freedom from gender bias, largely for granted—something that has tended to make all this progress little-noticed. But while Hillary Clinton may not have become president, all around the world the unfettered daughters of the '80s and '90s are rising in politics, confidently speaking of women's truths and women's values—just as they are in fashion.

"Women coming together and supporting each other have always been at the core of everything I've done as a fashion designer," says Stella McCartney. "It's that connective tissue between all of us that truly inspires me." McCartney's early advocacy in sustainability and ethics, meanwhile, is fast becoming commonplace—surely the most significant change in values to have hit fashion in years.

In the '80s, the first wave of fashion environmentalism was also woman-led, with Eileen Fisher, Katharine Hamnett, and Maria Cornejo at the forefront. What that generation began to commit to is now a surge lifting rafts of new practitioners, with Emily Bode, Marine Serre, and Gabriela Hearst among them. We're at the point where there's no contradiction left between desirable, sophisticated clothes and environmentally friendly, considerately crafted ones.

The outspokenness of women designers is also increasingly being heard in these days of backsliding gender politics. When Chiuri, the first woman creative director in the history of Christian Dior, famously put the title of a Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie essay, "We Should All Be

WHITE MAGIC

With the appointment of Virginie Viard as artistic director, the Parisian maison is once again headed by a woman designing for other women. Ceretti wears **Chanel's** duchesse-satin jacket and pants ($3,600); select Chanel stores. **Tod's** oxfords.

FULL-BATTLE RATTLE

Razor-sharp tailoring is a McQueen signature; here Sarah Burton adds a military twist that commands attention. Yai wears **Alexander McQueen**'s blazer, side-stripe pants, and cross-body harness chain; Alexander McQueen, NYC.

CLEAN CUT
Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen's The Row has become synonymous with pared-back—even pure—luxuriousness. Valletta wears a belted cotton-silk faille coat ($4,690) and layered silk organza shift dresses ($2,750 each) by **The Row.** Coat at net-a-porter.com. Dresses at The Row, NYC.

FINE LINE

FROM FAR LEFT: Model Carolyn Murphy wears an **Alberta Ferretti** jacket ($2,895), top ($780), pants ($490), and snakeskin cowboy boots; Barneys New York, NYC. Wen wears **Sacai**'s asymmetric coat ($2,580) and skirt ($1,100) with Sacai boots. Coat at ssense.com. Skirt at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC. Summers wears **Chloé**'s silk georgette top ($2,195), button-paneled wool check skirt ($1,995), and boots; Chloé boutiques. Ceretti wears **Isabel Marant**'s oversize blazer ($1,195), turtleneck ($340), and cuissardes; isabelmarant.com. **AMO** jeans, $260; amodenim.com.

Feminists," on a T-shirt in her debut collection in 2016, it was personal: "I was 51, thinking about all the phases of my life and reflecting on what society puts on a woman as a wife, a daughter, a mother," she says. "To express your craft in fashion now is not just about making an unbelievable dress—as a designer and as a woman, I think you have a responsibility to read the changing age."

Among the forces giving human shape to the way women designers think are generational bonds: mothers and daughters, friends and sisters working together and, in turn, gathering more women to work with them. "We're a whole female team," says Simone Rocha, who started her company on the strength of her tomboy femininity with her mother, Odette, in

"There used to be a joke: If you're going to get pregnant in the fashion industry, go work for Stella McCartney," McCartney says. "That's a joke I'm very proud of"

2010. "Having my mother and the girls in the studio does make a difference—I want to be sure everyone can be part of it. Designing for me comes from a raw female dialogue."

A certain toxic myth in fashion—that great work comes only from sole geniuses pulling inspiration out of the air—has proved dangerous to many a male designer's health. Women, on the other hand, tend to use pooled opinions and empathy as their design superpower. Waight Keller, who worked her way up as a design assistant in male-led houses before she reached Chloé and then stepped up as artistic director at Givenchy in 2017, knows the difference. "I was always working for men before, interpreting their idea of women. But after I became a creative director, it started coming from within. That's something I've really advocated—that it's so important to feel it."

It was working with a sisterhood that formed Chiuri's career outlook during her start at Fendi in the '80s. "They were a company of five sisters—women who had families, who showed

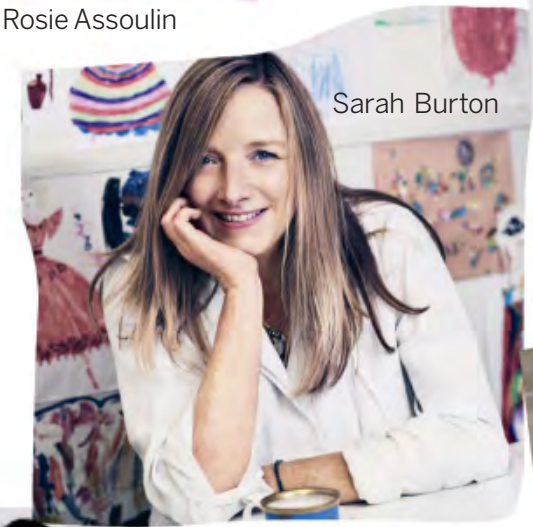
Vivienne Westwood

Natacha Ramsay-Levi

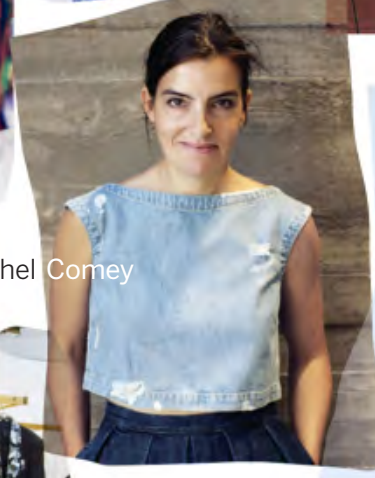
Rosie Assoulin

Becca McCharen-Tran

Johanna Ortiz



Sarah Burton



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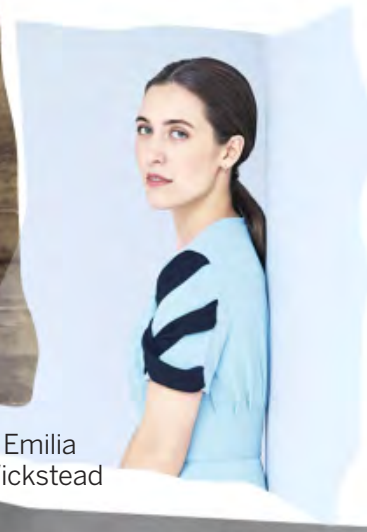

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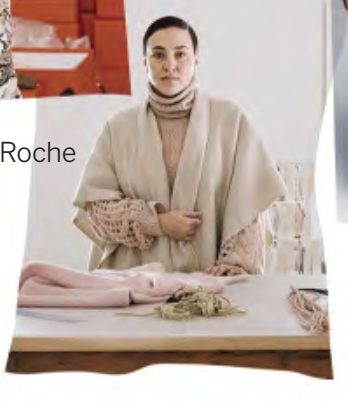

Catherine Holstein

Giorgia Tordini and Gilda Ambrosio

Stella McCartney

DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE

ENVIRONMENTAL ART

The industry is following **Stella McCartney**'s lead toward sustainability and transparency. Murphy demonstrates the straightforward appeal of McCartney's women- and earth-friendly designs in a belted trench coat ($4,655) and platform boots; Stella McCartney, NYC.

TRUE BLUE

Gabriela Hearst is building a business based on the belief that sophistication and sustainability aren't mutually exclusive. Ceretti wears the designer's cerulean pleated shirtdress ($3,990) over checked pants ($1,190) and cinches the look with the suit's matching blazer ($1,890); Gabriela Hearst, NYC.

MORE IS MORE

FROM FAR LEFT: Ceretti's floral **Koché** jacket ($1,175) and pants ($920; both at Barneys New York, NYC) inset with a rose-patterned lace mixes couture craft with street flash. Model Adut Akech mixes romance with rebellion in **Prada**'s floral dress and zip-up combat boots (select Prada stores). Model Ugbad Abdi blossoms in **Rodarte**'s floral cloque jacket and asymmetrical skirt (matchesfashion.com). **Wolford** tights. **Prada** platform oxfords. Summers coordinates **Tory Burch**'s peacoat ($798) with a floral pleated dress ($1,498) and boots; toryburch.com.

ON THE BUTTON

Vera Wang is equally adept at dressing women for their big day and for their everyday life. Wen wears a **Vera Wang Collection** boardroom-ready white button-down shirt with exaggerated cuffs ($850) and fluid, pleated black trousers ($1,150); Vera Wang, Beverly Hills.

ON A TEAR

Rather than pump up the volume in her designs, Victoria Beckham prefers a pared-down look that lets the wearer shine. Akech in **Victoria Beckham**'s peekaboo camel coat ($2,990), valentine-red blouse ($890), skirt ($990), and boots; victoriabeckham.com.

Silvia Fendi

Veronica Swanson Beard and Veronica Miele Beard

Anna Sui

Clare Waight Keller

Christelle Kocher

Victoria Beckham

Angela Missoni

Martine Rose

Vera Wang

Maria Grazia Chiuri

Rei Kawakubo

Mary Katrantzou

respect for each other, and who also recognized each other's different aptitudes. I was so lucky, because most Italian fashion wasn't that way."

Sarah Burton describes her way of crafting clothes with her team at Alexander McQueen as "more of a hive than a hierarchy." Her belief in the strength and sensitivity of women gets subtly transmitted in everything she does, right through to the speech about female emancipation by the suffragette Christabel Pankhurst on Burton's fall show soundtrack. Recently, she's been hybridizing tailoring with side-drapes, whorling 3-D roses into jackets, and implanting Victoriana bustles into tuxedos—contemporary advances that do away with old binaries of masculine-feminine dressing.

"The point," says Burton, "is that to be powerful, you don't have to look like a man."

The breakthrough to the sunny uplands where all sorts of women's styles and talents are now being sought out has, of course, only been reached after years of ingrained institutional gender bias. I remember being shocked as I overheard—at the turn of the millennium, when McCartney, Waight Keller, Burton, and Phoebe Philo were in their early 20s—male fashion executives debating the hireability of young women as creative directors due to their awkward tendency to give birth. That, and the insidious whispering of male pundits that women were capable only of designing wearable clothes—a genetically lower category than the high-flown genius created by a man.

It was the current generation of professionals who turned the tables on everybody—but not without a fight. "I started out at 25 in a very male-driven Parisian house," McCartney remembers of her time at Chloé, "but I noticed that it was younger women who were really driving the sales." She soon jumped ship to set up her own label—a now CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

AT EASE

Maria Grazia Chiuri is updating Christian Dior's house codes—including the ultra-femme hourglass silhouette. This time around, it adapts to the body rather than being imposed upon it by boning and other constraints. Model Jill Kortleve wears a **Dior** knit bodysuit under a strapless dress; Dior stores.

COVER STORY

For the British-Jamaican designer Grace Wales Bonner, fashion is a medium to explore ideas of race and identity—and feeling. Abdi throws a curve in a **Wales Bonner** herringbone jacket ($1,705) and skirt ($985); modaoperandi .com. **Eytys** oxfords.

PRODUCED BY ALEXIS PIQUERAS AT AP STUDIO, INC. SET DESIGN, SPENCER VROOMAN.

STRONG SUIT

Since taking over at Givenchy, Clare Waight Keller has designed a royal wedding dress, tackled couture and menswear, and made suiting a signature. Summers wears **Givenchy** pants ($1,285) and jacket ($3,155) cinched by a chain-draped belt; Givenchy, NYC. In this story: hair, James Pecis; makeup, Hannah Murray. Details, see In This Issue.

Madam President?

At a historic moment for women in politics, a record number are competing for the Democratic presidential nomination. What will it take to shatter the nation's most stubborn glass ceiling? Amy Chozick reports. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz.

WASHINGTON WOMEN
The five female lawmakers running for president. FROM FAR LEFT: Senator Amy Klobuchar, Representative Tulsi Gabbard, and Senators Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren, and Kamala Harris. Sittings Editor: Tonne Goodman.

Elizabeth Warren practically leaps off the armchair in her Washington, D.C., condo when it hits her. "I got here today courtesy of three bags of M&Ms and a *very* cooperative toddler," she says. By *here* she means the candidacy for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. I've just sat down with the Massachusetts senator, on taupe-colored furniture that looks plucked from a corporate-apartment catalog, to talk about the 2020 election. I mention in passing that I need to make the 4 p.m. Acela back to New York to relieve my babysitter. This reminds Warren of a lengthy story, told with expressive hand waving and a recitation of "Wheels on the Bus," from her years as a working mom. She was about to start Rutgers Law School and desperately needed day care for her daughter Amelia. The only acceptable option she could find in the Newark area required that children be "dependably potty trained." Amelia wasn't even two at the time, but Warren spent all weekend luring her to the kiddie toilet with a rainbow of M&Ms. On Monday, Warren says, "I looked at the form . . . at Amelia, at the form, back at Amelia . . . and 'Yep! Dependably potty trained, all right!' "

It's an indelibly female story from a candidate who—like most of the other women running for president—would rather not talk about her gender on the campaign trail. Warren doesn't lace her speeches with promises to make history or shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling. The steamy spring afternoon we meet in D.C., she is wearing her usual uniform of black tank top and black slacks, more proletariat rabble-rouser than solid-white suffragette.

And yet her gender is a subject she and the other female candidates can't escape. (The day before, I'd heard an MSNBC pundit declare that Warren was not a "connectable female"—which led to a panel debate titled "Can a woman beat Trump? Some Democrats wonder if it's worth the risk.") Perhaps that's because they have so little else in common. The six women running for the Democratic nomination come from different backgrounds. They range in age from 70 (Warren) to 38 (Representative Tulsi Gabbard). They are lawyers and senators, professors and soldiers and even an author and spiritual adviser to Oprah Winfrey (Marianne Williamson). They disagree on campaign tactics and policies. I spoke to Senator Amy Klobuchar just after she came out against Warren's plan to cancel most student debt and make tuition at public colleges free. (And don't even get the other women started on Gabbard's foreign-policy positions.) But they also form an unlikely sisterhood in the inspiring, baffling, often infuriating contest to defeat President Trump.

While each has so far trailed the leading male candidates—Warren and Senator Kamala Harris poll closest to the top of this group—collectively they have smashed our stubborn assumptions about powerful women and permanently changed our notion of what a presidential election looks like. For the first time, multiple women stand on the presidential-debate stages, their presence signaling to millions of Americans that the era of a dozen men—and *maybe* a lone woman—arguing the issues is over. These candidates have also, inevitably, reminded us of the hurdles, bordering on bulwarks, that women at the highest level of American politics still face. To many of us, watching the 2020 race unfold has felt less like a celebration of rah-rah feminism and more like a daily, live-tweeted, televised pelting by the patriarchy. Indeed, we cannot assess any of these candidates without also assessing our own biases. Debates about who is "electable" (or not) have become a smokescreen for lingering discomfort with what we have still, after 243 years as a republic, never seen: the election of a woman president.

Even as I write that line I am reminded of a story of mine that was never published. Anticipating (like the rest of the world) that Hillary Clinton would win the 2016 election, I prepared a piece for the *New York Times,* with my *Times* colleague Patrick Healy, about Hillary's hard-earned victory. The story had been edited, fact-checked, and laid out under the headline MADAM PRESIDENT—the kind of six-column spread that readers keep in their basements for generations. When Election Night went a different direction, the newsroom changed course, and the historic November 9, 2016, edition of the *Times* declared, TRUMP TRIUMPHS, with a photo of Trump casting his ballot in a blue tie with Jared Kushner at his side. The other story remains frozen in the amber of my in-box, a relic of an alternate political reality. When I look back on it now, nearly three years later, it's not that I thought this election would be easier for a female candidate, but I didn't think that it would be *this* hard.

> "If someone says, 'Talk to us about women's issues,' I smile and say, 'I am *so* glad you want to talk about the economy,' " says Harris, "or 'I am *so* glad you want to talk about national security' "

I figured the women now running for president would be propelled by the success of the newly elected women in Congress, of seemingly impossible Democratic victories across the country, of the power of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Instagram feed and a newly potent era of political activism. These women could also run without the history (I refuse to say baggage) that Hillary carried with her. I still wonder how much of voters' hesitancy about Hillary was based on sexism (my guess is a lot) and how much was discomfort with a political family that had weathered so many scandals (real and imagined) and loomed so large for decades. But whatever the answer, the women running in 2020 would surely enjoy a clean slate. Whatever skeletons were in their closets couldn't possibly match those of the Trump White House. Harris allegedly flip-flopped on private insurance? Klobuchar ate a salad with a plastic comb and then snapped at a staffer to clean it? Warren had to apologize to the Cherokee Nation for claiming Native American heritage? Yes, well, Trump heaped praise on the North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, (briefly) declared he'd gladly accept dirt on an opponent from a foreign power, and watched as both his personal lawyer and campaign chairman embarked on lengthy prison sentences. Finally, I thought, voters would no longer tell me (as they so often did when I asked why they didn't support Hillary) that they would *love* to vote for a woman for president, just not *that* woman. There was no way that Harris, Gillibrand,

SET DESIGN, MARY HOWARD STUDIO. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE JEFFERSON HOTEL.

Warren, Klobuchar, Gabbard, and Williamson could all be *that* woman . . . could they?

Rather than being propelled, these women have seemed stuck in a sort of political purgatory, firmly, frustratingly sandwiched between Hillary's loss and the country's (eventual?) realization that a woman can be president. Studies conducted by Northeastern University and FiveThirtyEight, respectively, found that the female candidates have received more negative coverage in the news media than their male rivals, and have had a harder time breaking through in cable TV and viral moments (unless you count Trump evoking the massacre at Wounded Knee to mock Warren). Depending on the day, these women have been eclipsed by a man who can speak Norwegian (Pete Buttigieg) or who played in a punk band (Beto O'Rourke) or who picked up $700,000 on a Wednesday night in Hollywood (Joe Biden). As I was reporting this story, David Axelrod, the former Obama adviser, praised Buttigieg's taco-eating ability. ("He can eat tacos without apparently dropping any on his white shirt," Axelrod tweeted). I tried to imagine a woman candidate (or any woman) being praised for eating, well, anything.

None of these candidates want to dwell on sexism and double standards—and even asking those questions feels a little sexist when you realize that the men in the race get to spend their time talking about issues, policy, their plan to defeat Trump, Irish modernist literature. Of course I still ask. What about the time a Boston radio reporter described Warren during her Massachusetts senate campaign as "a strand of pearls short of looking like the head of the P.T.A."? Warren tells me that after that one she enlisted her husband, the Harvard law professor Bruce Mann, to be a sort of taste tester. He'll scan news stories and then yell upstairs—"Clear!"—if they are safe for his wife to read.

On the topic of uneven media coverage, Klobuchar gives a flash of that cutting politesse known as Minnesota nice: "The public wants a leader to have an optimistic economic agenda, and they're not really going to relate to you complaining that you didn't get as fair press coverage as some guy who got up on a counter." (She's talking to you, Beto.) The Minnesota senator also says that the women in the race have *so* much elected experience (a combined 40 years in Congress) that they inevitably get tougher questions than male candidates with lighter résumés. "We've all been asked those questions because we've done the job," Klobuchar says. "People who have less of that experience—there are no questions to ask.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS

Five candidates, representing a combined 40 years in Congress. In this story: hair and makeup, Carrie LaMarca. Details, see In This Issue.

So they get the personal questions." She pauses. "I'm happy to talk about my first pet." (A turtle that ate raw hamburger, in case you were wondering.)

No matter how far we've come, the reality is that "the idea of a woman in a leadership position is still seen as 'Oh, I don't know if we can go there,'" says Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. That sentiment—echoed in endless debates on cable news—eventually can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, says Jennifer Lawless, a professor at the University of Virginia and an expert on women in politics. "It could signal to voters that these women won't be as credible to take on Donald Trump." It's a concern the candidates say they hear over and over again. Kirsten Gillibrand likes to point out that a woman *did* technically beat Trump. "We must all remember that Hillary won the popular vote," the New York senator says. "She was genuinely seen as the most qualified candidate."

But Clinton's defeat has, for the most part, been more of an albatross—a sign of *See? We told you the country wasn't ready.* Walsh says many voters she talks to are still "shell-shocked" by the 2016 election. At a CNN town hall in Manchester, New Hampshire, a college student asked Warren (who has age and hair coloring and not much else in common with Clinton) how she'd avoid getting "Hillaryed." "What has happened is that this becomes the narrative if you turn on CNN or MSNBC every night," says Lawless. "They're asking, 'Can a woman do this?' and every time you hear that question, there's a possibility that the answer is no."

> For Gabbard, the race feels less revolutionary than overdue—obvious, even. "I've heard from girls eight, nine, ten years old, and for them this is what an election *should* look like"

In her 2014 book *Off the Sidelines,* Gillibrand declared that she feared the women's movement was dead. She lights up when I remind her of this. "I *did!* I said it was dead." We have met up for a late lunch at a farm-to-table restaurant in Manhattan made to look like a rural barn: A-frame roof, vintage sconces, plenty of reclaimed wood. Of all of the female candidates, Gillibrand has been the most outspoken about her identity as a woman and as a mom. She's appeared with Gloria Steinem and practically moved into The Wing, the rose-hued, female-focused co–working space. As we mull whether to share a cheese plate, she asks if I am still breastfeeding ("Listeria is real!" she tells me) and drapes a heavy navy shawl over her shoulders ("I'm always cold"). Will White House thermostats be set several degrees warmer if (when?) a woman occupies the Oval Office?

It's hard to say whether Gillibrand's unabashed embrace of her gender and motherhood has had an impact on her struggle to break through in polls. Her candidacy, which once seemed so promising, now hovers under 1 percent at the time of publication—behind Gabbard and about tied with Williamson. There are those Democrats who still resent Gillibrand's 2017 push for Senator Al Franken's resignation after allegations of sexual harassment. ("I would not have applied that pressure at that time before we knew more," Buttigieg told MSNBC.) Others offer only vague refrains that Gillibrand's centrist policies, her promise to win in purple districts, and even her New York Senate seat, remind them too much of Hillary. Then there are some who say the 52-year-old senator "isn't ready"—an argument that reminds so many women of the Catch-22 of aging. We are too young, too inexperienced, not ready, right up until the moment when we are past our prime (an argument that has been made about Warren). Male candidates, meanwhile, can be fresh-faced (Buttigieg, 37), energetic (Beto, 46), and then elder statesmen (Biden, 76, and Bernie Sanders, 77). In June, Biden answered a woman's question related to his support for the 1994 crime bill with "You make a really good point, kiddo. . . ." At that moment, I was reminded of the vanishingly small window—blink and you miss it—when a woman is neither kiddo nor washed up, but just that perfect age to run for president.

Democrats are reluctant to give President Trump credit for much of anything, but they will happily point out that he has motivated a wave of women to march and tell their #MeToo stories and run for office. The 127 women now in the 116th Congress make up 23 percent of all members. This is progress for sure, but still sort of a bummer when you remember we're more than half the U.S. population. Gillibrand and Klobuchar both praise House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's unique ability to rattle the president. Then there is Ocasio-Cortez, who has become such a force that backing her Green New Deal is practically a litmus test for candidates who want to appeal to the liberal base. Ocasio-Cortez hasn't endorsed anyone in 2020, but she did hand Warren social-media gold when the two women sat down to critique the *Game of Thrones* finale, declaring themselves #TeamSansa. "I think the reason all of these women ran is because they weren't going to accept a nation where Trump's views of the world would prevail," Gillibrand says.

Harris sees this play out at her campaign events. Attendees tell her that they'd never waited in line for a political event before, but are so appalled by the Trump administration that here they are, bundled up outside a high school gym in Keene, New Hampshire. Every candidate, every election year, uses the cliché that "this is the most important election of our lifetimes," but maybe this one actually is? "The morning after that night in November 2016, people woke up realizing they could not take anything for granted," Harris says. "People woke up assuming the right thing won't happen unless they're active."

I've reached the California senator, a former prosecutor and state attorney general, by phone the morning after she's participated in a CNN town hall. She has a quirk of saying she'll study a controversial issue or that she wants to have a "conversation" or a "discussion" about say, reparations for black Americans or Warren's free-college plan. Trump has nicknamed Harris "nasty," but the rest of the political universe landed on less colorful adjectives: *cautious*, *unknowable.* (IS KAMALA HARRIS TOO CAUTIOUS? LET'S HAVE THAT CONVERSATION, read a headline in the *San Francisco Chronicle.*)

I ask Harris if she thought we were getting it all wrong: Was it just that a woman (and a woman of color, in particular) has such a razor-thin margin of error that she *has* to be careful, particularly compared to the off-the-cuff men in the race? All she would say was this: "I grew up in a profession when I was acutely aware that with a swipe of my pen, someone could be deprived of liberty. I take my words seriously. Maybe some people aren't used to having power, so they don't take it seriously."

In this group, Harris is perhaps the most wary about being pigeonholed by gender. "If someone says, 'Talk to us about women's issues,' I look at them and smile and say, 'I am *so* glad you want to talk about the economy' or 'I am *so* glad you want to talk about national security.' " Harris puts a stinging little intonation on the word *so.*

As the only millennial woman in the race, Gabbard has her own perspective. On the phone from Hawaii, she tells me she finds it offensive that Democrats assumed she'd support Clinton over Sanders in the 2016 primary, "believing that I have no ability to see beyond my own gender and consider the issues." For Gabbard, having multiple women in the 2020 race is less revolutionary than overdue—obvious, even. "I've heard from girls eight, nine, ten years old, and for them this is what an election *should* look like. It's not a shocker."

One of the upsides to running in 2020 is that *nothing* much is a shocker anymore. Porn stars and Russian hackers? The president of the United States, in a span of a couple of days, picking fights with Meghan Markle *and* Bette Midler? Maybe I am being overly optimistic, but I see something liberating—particularly for female candidates—in Trump's subverting of traditional political norms . . . because women presidents aren't the norm either. Thanks to Trump and a news cycle that is suffering from acute attention-deficit disorder (Avenatti who?), women candidates, perhaps, don't have to worry so much about being perfect, about biting their tongue and saying what they think voters want to hear. That's not to say voters are ready to embrace them live-streaming an appointment with their dental hygienist or showing up on the debate stage without makeup, but every woman in the race appears to have blissfully cast aside Hillary's (often painful but also understandable) abundance of caution. They do not tweet by committee or adhere to a media strategy that essentially ignores us. (Harris is cautious, yes, but not so much that she doesn't speak her mind. Asked if she'd call herself an "Obama Democrat," Harris quipped, "I'd call myself Kamala.")

There are other stark differences: Whereas Hillary disappeared off the campaign trail for days to collect big checks from donors, Warren has banned private fund-raisers altogether, a move that made her own team worry that she'll be at a financial disadvantage. (In the first three months of 2019, Warren raised more than $6 million, putting her in fifth place, according to federal filings released in April.) And yes, all of these candidates plan to spend a lot of time in Wisconsin. In fact, if there is any candidate who risks being Hillaryed, it is not a woman but Biden, whose skimpy campaign schedule, ample fund-raising, connection to '90s-era policies, and do-no-harm approach to the press give me flashbacks to 2016, when Hillary's press corps used to joke that "spontaneity is embargoed until 4 p.m."

> "Women just focus differently," Warren says. "It is different to have someone in the White House who has been there, who has struggled to get child care, who has been pregnant"

The candidates I speak to agree that 2020 is less about the symbolism of having a woman president (though that would be nice) than it is about substance—how her life experience would influence policy- and decision-making. Klobuchar, for example, tells me she first decided to run for office in Minnesota in 1995, when a hospital discharged her 24 hours after giving birth to her daughter, Abigail, who had esophageal problems. She showed up to the state capitol with a half-dozen pregnant friends to support a bill mandating a 48-hour postpartum hospital stay. "We outnumbered the insurance lobbyists two to one," she remembers, "and when the legislators said, 'When should this bill take effect?' all the pregnant women said, '*Now!*' " The bill later helped influence a federal law, part of the Newborns' and Mothers' Health Protection Act of 1996.

As I reported this story, Alabama passed a law that would effectively ban access to abortion. The Democratic candidates were all quick to rebuke the measure and affirm their support for *Roe v. Wade.* Warren, within two days, rolled out a four-pronged approach to protect abortion rights regardless of who sits on the Supreme Court. "The notion is that women just focus differently," Warren says. "It is different to have someone in the White House who has been there, who has struggled to get child care, who has been pregnant." That idea stays with me: A president who knows what it is like to be pregnant. Or who knows what it is like to not want to be pregnant.

The fury over abortion rights came just as Biden entered the race and immediately enjoyed front-runner status. In his campaign-kickoff speech in Philadelphia, the former vice president declared that he would reject anger in the Democratic Party, offering a sunnier, unifying vision. That sentiment, delivered amid real fears about a rollback of abortion rights in Alabama, Georgia, and other states, riled several of Biden's female opponents.

"I certainly disagree," Gillibrand says when I call to ask her about Biden's speech. "I believe that righteous anger is part of who we are as Americans and who we are as women. Righteous anger means standing up for what we believe in, and fighting against hateful rhetoric and misogyny and anti-Semitism and racism and bigotry."

Like many women, Gillibrand is a preternatural multitasker—and practically still out of breath when she takes my call. It is one of those perfect spring Sundays in New York, 68 degrees, zero humidity, and she's just finished the AIDS Walk in Central Park. After CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

Love and Loss

Beneath her perfect pop-star veneer, Ariana Grande carries around excruciating heartache. She talks to Rob Haskell about her last two years—a roller coaster of triumph, tragedy, and growing up. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz.

HEAD SPACE
"It's hard to sing songs that are about wounds that are so fresh," says Grande, photographed in the makeshift studio at her childhood home in Boca Raton, Florida. Khaite cardigan, bralette, and boy shorts. Fashion Editor: Tonne Goodman.

In February of this year, Ariana Grande had the number-one, number-two, and number-three songs in America. So extreme a choke hold of the *Billboard* charts had only one antecedent: the Beatles achieved it in 1964, when "Can't Buy Me Love," "Twist and Shout," and "Do You Want to Know a Secret" blanketed the airwaves. (Grande responded to the news of her pop preeminence in trademark terse, unpunctuated Twitterese: "wait what".) But the singer, whose fame does not so much polarize as it sorts—into those who adore her, ape her high ponytail, and have made her the second-most-followed person on Instagram, behind the Portuguese soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo, and those for whom she barely registers (yet)—was in quiet knots. *Thank U, Next,* the album she wrote and recorded in a two-week fever dream the previous October, contained the most wrenchingly personal songs in her canon, and she was about to embark on a tour of at least 40 cities, where night after night she had to sing her way through a succession of private horrors.

"I was researching healing and PTSD and talking to therapists, and everyone was like, 'You need a routine, a schedule,'" Grande says, yanking off a pair of black, ultra-high platform ankle boots so that she can crisscross her legs on the sofa and sit close. The boots, by the way, are Sergio Rossi, though we have to dig into the insole to determine this; Grande knows about music, she says, and not about clothes. "Of course because I'm an extremist, I'm like, OK, I'll go on tour! But it's hard to sing songs that are about wounds that are so fresh. It's fun, it's pop music, and I'm not trying to make it sound like anything that it's not, but these songs to me really do represent some heavy shit."

We are sitting in the home studio of Tommy Brown, Grande's close friend and a producer on *Thank U, Next,* at the end of a noiseless cul-de-sac in Northridge, in the San Fernando Valley. (The earthquake that occurred here in 1994, six months after Grande's birth, was among the strongest ever recorded in an American city.) A layer of cloud casts a dull light over the low-lying suburban houses and their front yards dotted with iceberg roses and pepper trees. Grande's fans, knowns as Arianators, rivaling the Beyhive and the Little Monsters as the most dedicated and attuned in music, know that she loves the dour weather, hates the beach of her cosseted Floridian youth. "I'm like, please bring me the cold and the clammy and the clouds," she says. "You want what you didn't grow up getting."

Although she has a home of her own in Beverly Hills, the kind of vast, marble-paved manse that young stars buy before they're ready for them, Tommy's is where she likes spending time when she's in Los Angeles. Grande is wearing black leggings and an oversize sweatshirt emblazoned with the words SOCIAL HOUSE, the name of a pop duo from Pittsburgh who are friends and now one of her opening acts. A large white pearl, her birthstone, glimmers on her finger. (She is a Cancer: a little crab happiest in her shell.) It occurs to me that we're talking about the weather for precisely the reason that people talk about the weather, in order to dance around the "heavy shit." It's a dance that spins out quickly. Grande begins to cry nine minutes into our conversation, at the mention of Coachella, which she headlined this year for the first time. Following a bumbling interchange of apologies—"I'm so sorry I'm crying," "I'm so sorry I made you cry"—she explains that the festival offered near-constant reminders of the rapper Mac Miller (born Malcolm McCormick), her dear friend, collaborator, and ex-boyfriend, who died of an accidental overdose in September 2018. I imagined we would visit this and other delicate topics somewhere deep in our discussion, but grief creates a conversational black hole, drawing all particles to it. "I never thought I'd even go to Coachella," she explains. "I was always a person who never went to festivals and never went out and had fun like that. But the first time I went was to see Malcolm perform, and it was such an incredible experience. I went the second year as well, and I associate . . . heavily . . . it was just kind of a mindfuck, processing how much has happened in such a brief period."

For a woman who recently turned 26 and is enjoying the most successful chapter of her career, it has also been a spectacularly, and publicly, brutal couple of years. Fifteen months before

> At home, there was a karaoke machine, and everyone was always singing. "The soundtrack was Whitney, Madonna, Mariah, Celine, Barbra," Ariana recalls. "All the divas"

THREE OF HEARTS
"She has a way of taking on everyone's pain," says Grande's mother, Joan, CENTER. Grandmother Marjorie is at NEAR RIGHT. On Ariana: Chloé dress.

Miller's death, in May 2017, Grande had just finished the encore of a sold-out show on her *Dangerous Woman* tour in Manchester, England, when a suicide bomber detonated in the foyer, leaving 23 people dead, including an eight-year-old concertgoer. Shell-shocked and reeling, Grande and her mother, who was in the audience that night, flew home to Florida. (The tweet she mustered the next day was for a time the most-liked in the medium's history: "broken. from the bottom of my heart, i am so so sorry. i don't have words.") But she quickly determined that before she was going to sing anywhere again, she needed to sing in Manchester. She returned two weeks later to visit survivors in hospitals and families in mourning. And she staged a benefit concert that raised $25 million. Guest stars included Coldplay, Katy Perry, and Justin Bieber, and Grande cruised the stage belting out her dirtiest songs at the request of one victim's mother after it was suggested that the bomber, who had links to the Islamic State, had acted in protest of her racy pop persona.

But it was Grande's culminating rendition of "Over the Rainbow," intoned through her sobs, that is the night's eternal image. If you didn't know Ari, as her friends call her, if you sorted into that other group and assumed that Grande was a lab-engineered Frankensinger, a sexy cyborg extruding melismas in baby doll dresses and kitten ears, here may have been the first piece of evidence to the contrary. "Ariana's an open book," says her friend Miley Cyrus, who flew over for the concert. "She has always shared her experiences with this beautiful blend of reality and the fantasy that pop culture requires. But holding her in my arms that night and feeling her shake from the loss of lives, literally feeling her heart pounding against mine—when you can let down the personas and cry with the rest of

NO PLACE LIKE HOME
With her dog Toulouse at a local beach in Boca Raton. Dior dress. Eric Javits hat. In this story: hair for Ariana Grande by Josh Liu; hair for Joan and Marjorie Grande by Cedric Salon; makeup for Ariana Grande by Hannah Murray; makeup for Joan and Marjorie Grande by Edward Cruz. Details, see In This Issue.

SET DESIGN BY HANS MAHARAWAL

the world, it's unifying. It's a reminder that music can be our greatest healer."

She released no original music until the following spring, when "No Tears Left to Cry," the first single off her fourth studio album, *Sweetener,* offered up a dance-floor hymn to optimism in the face of catastrophe. (The album's closing track, "Get Well Soon," addresses Manchester's survivors directly. Including a period of silence at the song's end, it clocks in at 5:22, the date of the bombing.) But in November 2018, after Miller's death and the dissolution of her brief engagement to the *Saturday Night Live* comic Pete Davidson, Grande had to acknowledge that she was far from cried out, and she did so in a now-famous tweet: "remember when i was like hey i have no tears left to cry and the universe was like HAAAAAAAAA bitch u thought."

These words, classic darkly humorous and self-deprecating Grande, are about as far as she has been willing to go toward addressing the events of the last two years. "I've been open in my art and open in my DMs and my conversations with my fans directly, and I want to be there for them, so I share things that I think they'll find comfort in knowing that I go through as well," she explains. "But also there are a lot of things that I swallow on a daily basis that I don't want to share with them, because they're mine. But they know that. They can literally see it in my eyes. They know when I'm disconnected, when I'm happy, when I'm tired. It's this weird thing we have. We're like fucking E.T. and Elliott." Grande admits to approaching our conversation with a mix of dread and guilt about her dread. "I'm a person who's been through a lot and doesn't know what to say about any of it to myself, let alone the world. I see myself onstage as this perfectly polished, great-at-my-job entertainer, and then in situations like this I'm just this little basket-case puddle of figuring it out." She laughs through her sniffles. "I have to be the luckiest girl in the world, and the unluckiest, for sure. I'm walking this fine line between healing myself and not letting the things that I've gone through be picked at before I'm ready, and also celebrating the beautiful things that have happened in my life and not feeling scared that they'll be taken away CONTINUED ON PAGE 143

Amy Sherald

The portraitist to Michelle Obama is preparing for her New York debut. By Dodie Kazanjian.

IN 2012, WHEN AMY SHERALD was 39, she collapsed in a Baltimore Rite Aid. The artist had been diagnosed eight years earlier with idiopathic cardiomyopathy—a disease of the heart muscle that makes it difficult for the organ to pump blood—and had been told that she would need a heart transplant. At the time, it hadn't seemed urgent. She was in great physical shape, training to compete in a triathlon, and she was about to get her M.F.A. from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Now, suddenly, she was in the hospital at Johns Hopkins, waiting for the transplant. By a cruel irony, her beloved younger brother, Michael, was dying from non–smoking related lung cancer in Georgia. "I knew at that point I had to live," Sherald tells me, "because my mom couldn't lose two children within weeks." Eleven days after Michael died, Sherald got a new heart and a new life.

Sherald, of course, is the artist behind the now famous official portrait of Michelle Obama that hangs in the Smithsonian. But when she was chosen for the commission, in 2016, she was still largely unknown. Kehinde Wiley, the artist selected to paint President Obama's portrait, was an art-world star. His bold, heroic portraits of black subjects in poses that channel the Old Masters were on the must-have lists of savvy collectors. Sherald, on the other hand, was a 43-year-old African American artist who lived and worked in Baltimore. She painted vivid, head-on portraits of people she met on the street (and photographed)—"an American realist, painting American people doing American things," she tells me. Her name had surfaced in

SHINE A LIGHT

Sherald, in an Oscar de la Renta caftan, in her studio, with the photographer's assistant, Justin Johnson. Hair, Edris Nichols; makeup, Kiki Gifford. Details, see In This Issue.

Photographed by Carrie Mae Weems. Sittings Editor: Gabriella Karefa-Johnson.

Run the World

Trailblazers, pacesetters, fearless creatives—at a revolutionary moment for women, here are five making their mark.

front of the Obamas because she had recently won the National Portrait Gallery's Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, a contest open to any professional artist working in the United States. She is the first woman and the first African American to win it.

Sherald's painting of the former First Lady is larger than life and gloriously untraditional. Michelle sits facing us, chin resting on one hand, arms bare, rising from a mountainous, floor-length white skirt with geometric patterns in black, red, pink, and yellow. But the critical response was mixed. *New York Times* art critic Holland Cotter thought the dress outperformed the person. He wrote, "Mrs. Obama's face . . . could be almost anyone's face, like a model's face in a fashion spread." *New York Magazine*'s Jerry Saltz disagreed. "She is grand, elegant, gorgeous, but her jackrabbit-quick wit is right there." The most indelible reaction came from two-year-old Parker Curry, who was photographed standing in front of the painting, a look of awed enchantment on her face. "She's a queen," Parker told her mother; her reaction, and the painting itself, went viral. To me, the image captures not only the power and spirit of the subject, but also the hope and promise that Michelle Obama embodies, and art's ability to encompass that.

> "I'm not going to take myself too seriously, because I realize it just kind of happened. I worked hard, and this is a fun ride"

With a mile-wide smile and a warm hug, Sherald lets me into her Jersey City studio in Mana Contemporary, the two-million-square-foot former tobacco factory that's now a hive of artist spaces. She introduces me to August Wilson, her Pekingese–Jack Russell: "He's the perfect balance of a dog," she says as she prepares him a plate of grain–and–gluten free dinner patties. "Most Jack Russells are a little neurotic, kind of hyper. But he's really chill."

The studio is divided into three rooms, one of which is lined with canvases in various stages of development. Kelli Ryan, her studio assistant, is busy priming the two biggest ones (about ten feet tall, the largest she's ever done) with Napthol Scarlet. "It's my base," she explains. "Somebody told me this is what the Old Masters did, and I like the way it warms up the whole image when I paint over it." The paintings are all headed for her debut solo show next month in New York at Hauser & Wirth, the mega-gallery that now represents her worldwide. Ever since The Portrait, Sherald's mother, Geraldine, who never thought she could survive as an artist, has been "driving the bandwagon," Sherald tells me with an affectionate laugh. "She says, 'I always knew my daughter was going to be an amazing artist.' "

Two slightly smaller paintings are further along. Each one shows a standing woman looking straight at us, in a colorfully patterned dress. They both have the same dark-gray skin tone—a mixture of black and Naples Yellow—that Sherald gives to all her subjects. "It feels more powerful than if I painted the skin brown," she says. Half a dozen photographs are pinned to a wall. "This guy is an Alvin Ailey dancer," she says. "This one is Keoma, August's nanny and dog-walker, and this is a guy I met on the subway."

She recently moved to New Jersey, she explains, "for love." Last September she began living with Kevin Pemberton, a Brooklyn-born hedge funder, in a house that's a short drive from Mana Contemporary. A mutual friend introduced them ten years ago, but nothing clicked until last year. "I hated to leave Baltimore, because my heart is there," she says. "But his career is not portable." They go out a lot—Kevin likes to try new restaurants. They also love to go salsa dancing, and to the American Ballet Theatre and the Metropolitan Opera, where they recently saw the South African soprano Pretty Yende in *La Fille du Régiment.* The other night they went to Shakespeare in the Park and saw an all-black cast in *Much Ado About Nothing.* "It's amazing to walk into these spaces," she says, CONTINUED ON PAGE 145

Heidi Schreck

The playwright is giving a whole new meaning to political theater. By David Kamp.

IT'S OFTEN SAID that the upside of dark times is that they produce great art. "I would much prefer to have bad art and live in good times," says the writer and actor Heidi Schreck. Coming from her, this assertion is a bit rich—and Schreck knows it, laughing at her own words. We're meeting at a café near Manhattan's Helen Hayes Theater, where her extraordinary play, *What the Constitution Means to Me,* has been holding audiences rapt, both a critical and word-of-mouth hit.

Over the last two-plus years—not uncoincidentally the span of the 45th presidency—the show has migrated from a tiny downtown theater to California's Berkeley Rep to Broadway, with the latest production earning Schreck an Obie award for Best New American Play and two Tony Award nominations. As boisterous and open-hearted offstage as she is on-, Schreck can't suppress a watery reddening of her eyes as she considers the impact that her show has had. "I get a lot of women who come back a second or third time and bring their daughters or mothers," she says. "I never thought I'd be getting whole families!"

A de facto one-woman production, with only a couple of strategically timed walk-ons by other performers, it finds Schreck doing aloud what many of us have, of late, been doing in the privacy of our own minds: questioning the bedrock assumptions that we have long held dear about the United States of America. In the play, the 47-year-old Schreck reconsiders her childhood as an oratorical prodigy from Wenatchee, Washington, who won speaking competitions by exalting the U.S. Constitution. On a set decorated to resemble the wood-paneled American Legion halls in which she competed as a youth, Schreck comes to the conclusion that her teenage crush—the 1787 document—maybe isn't so dreamy after

SHE THE PEOPLE

"I feel radically transformed by this show," says Schreck. Alexander McQueen dress. Hair, James Pecis; makeup, Hannah Murray. Details, see In This Issue.

Photographed by Zoe Ghertner. Sittings Editor: Camilla Nickerson.

PRODUCED BY ALEXIS PIQUERAS AT AP STUDIO, INC; SET DESIGN, SPENCER VROOMAN.

all. Drawing upon raw personal history, she details how her own family has been affected by the institutional biases against women that the Constitution helped perpetuate.

What the Constitution Means to Me is an audacious piece of art that somehow goes down easily—a testament to Schreck's offbeat candor. Much of the play, surprisingly, was written before the 2016 presidential election. "To me," says Schreck, "that speaks to the fact that what's happening now"—the post-Obama backslide into patriarchal illiberalism—"is not necessarily an aberration. I do think, though, that the moment we're in made the play more necessary." Tellingly, among those who have come to see the show are Hillary Clinton and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Though she had been developing the play since 2007, it wasn't until fairly recently that Schreck, a successful TV writer, felt the pull to return to her first love, the stage. (She and her husband, the theater director Kip Fagan, met in their 20s as members of an upstart theater company in Seattle called Printer's Devil. They currently live in Brooklyn, on the second floor of a town house they rent from close friends.) "I think I felt a kind of freedom being in my 40s," Schreck says, "where I was like, 'You know what? Why don't I just try something new?' "

Her gamble has been so successful that two TV writing projects—an Amazon series based on Patricia Lockwood's 2017 memoir *Priestdaddy* and a series for Hulu based on Joan Didion's California writing—are on hold while she deals with *Constitution*-mania. Next month, after winding up its Broadway run, the play will move to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. There are plans afoot for further productions that will feature other actors in the role of Heidi; the first of these will open in Los Angeles in January. "The truth is that any actor who plays this part will have stories from her own life that relate to the 14th Amendment, since that amendment covers reproductive rights, sexual and physical violence, equal protection under the law, citizenship, and the right to vote," says Schreck. "So every new production will be kind of a living document." □

Wendy Whelan

The dancer triumphantly returns to New York City Ballet—offstage but with more influence than ever. By Lilah Ramzi.

IT'S A SUBLIME SPRING day in New York, but Wendy Whelan wouldn't know a thing about it. She's spent the day in the windowless studios of the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, where rehearsals for George Balanchine's *Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet* are under way. Today she's dressed in dark skinny jeans and a navy cardigan, but even in this everyday outfit, you can see a body sculpted by the three decades she spent at New York City Ballet, 28 of those years as a principal dancer. In a profession where women often bow out by their mid-30s, Whelan's tenure onstage was remarkable. Now 52, she has become the first woman in the company's history to hold a permanent position within the artistic leadership.

"I never imagined myself here," she says. "I just thought, That's usually a guy's role."

Her appointment as the associate artistic director of NYCB in February—alongside Jonathan Stafford as the new artistic director of NYCB and School of American Ballet—not only ended a tumultuous year, it also signaled that the company was in need of a dramatic shift. In January of 2018, Peter Martins, the NYCB's star dancer turned ballet master in chief, retired, his resignation precipitated by accusations of sexual harassment. (Martins maintains his innocence, and the NYCB's investigation did not corroborate the allegations.) Then, just days before the fall season, City Ballet fired two male dancers (the company had earlier accepted the resignation of a third) accused of sharing explicit photos of female dancers. The company would "not put art before common decency," announced principal dancer Teresa Reichlen in a speech delivered on the evening of the fall gala, standing onstage with her fellow dancers.

The revelations of #MeTutu, as it was quickly dubbed, have the dimensions of a 21st-century scandal, but gender inequality is practically built into the DNA of ballet. In 19th-century France, upper-class men treated the Paris Opera Ballet as their personal brothel. (When the company received its Charles Garnier–designed theater in 1875, a backstage room to proposition dancers was reserved for deep-pocketed patrons.) Balanchine, the Russian-born father of American ballet—and NYCB cofounder—dissuaded his female dancers from marrying or having children, but married four ballerinas himself, each a dancer for whom he also choreographed. "The ballet is a purely female thing," Balanchine famously said, "it is a woman, a garden of beautiful flowers, and the man is the gardener."

> "I like to say it's a seismic shift. It's a very different field"

"I like to say it's a seismic shift," says Whelan of the change her appointment signals. "It's a very different field; different soil." She's warm and affable, in stark contrast to the imposing czarina one might expect at the head of a major company. And though she does not bring it up, her return to Lincoln Center has a certain poetic justice; as chronicled in the brutal 2016 documentary *Restless Creature,* her exodus was reluctant. In the years following, she continued to dance—"If I don't dance, I'd rather die," she once said—moving beyond ballet into different genres, working with choreographers like Kyle Abraham and collaborating with designers like Dries van Noten on costumes. This summer, she'll premiere a new piece with postmodern choreographer Lucinda Childs at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts. Though she's mindful of the physical demands of this project—"I have to get myself to class!"—she's also careful not to blur the lines between her own work and what she's doing for the dancers CONTINUED ON PAGE 146

PHOTOGRAPHED AT BARYSHNIKOV ARTS CENTER

A GOOD TURNOUT

Whelan showcases her balletic figure in a Pomandère sweater. Hair, Tamas Tuzes; makeup, Diane Kendal. Details, see In This Issue.

Photographed by Collier Schorr. Sittings Editor: Phyllis Posnick.

Ali Krieger and Ashlyn Harris

A beloved pair of soccer stars make their engagement (proudly) public. By Chloe Malle.

WHEN SOCCER STAR Ali Krieger trains with her goalie fiancée, Ashlyn Harris, "I try to score so I can rub it in later," she says, laughing. Both play for the Orlando Pride, so "everything is a competition," says Harris. Are these the first professional sports teammates to marry? They're certainly the most high-profile, having represented the U.S. at the World Cup this summer. They met nine years ago at training camp but kept their romance private—even as so-called Krashlyn fan-fiction proliferated every time they posted a picture together on social media. How fitting that their engagement was born of a selfie. The couple were taking a sunset photo in Clearwater Beach, Florida, when Krieger told Harris to move her hand out of the frame. ("She was blocking the view!") Krieger then saw the round-cut diamond that Harris had been hiding at home—"waiting for the perfect moment," Harris says.

Off-field, their focus turns domestic: their 180-pound Cane Corso Mastiff, Logan; cooking protein-packed pregame meals; watching *Game of Thrones*. "It's taken us a long time to figure out what balance looks like," admits Harris. The couple dream of adopting children but are keenly aware of how much of a juggling act that will be. "I think the first step for us was making our relationship public," Harris says. "We wanted to come out and say this is who we are."

The wedding is set for December in Miami. Harris, known for her hipster-dandy style, is considering a custom suit by Thom Browne or Tom Ford. Krieger has her dress picked out but wants to keep it a surprise. The guest list will be tight, about 100 people; Logan, their mastiff, will not attend, but she won't be left out either. Harris: "We will definitely dress her up and take pictures." □

PITCH PERFECT
Krieger, NEAR RIGHT, wearing Floravere, and Harris, in Gucci. Hair, Scott Patric; makeup, Lennie Billy. Details, see In This Issue.
Photographed by Carolyn Drake. Fashion Editor: Jorden Bickham.

CAROLYN DRAKE OF MAGNUM PHOTOS. PHOTOGRAPHED AT ORLANDO CITY STADIUM. PRODUCED BY SELECT SERVICES.

Unicorns Are Real

Once considered a niche market, women-run beauty start-ups are now joining the prestigious list of companies with billion-dollar valuations. Chloe Malle meets the visionaries changing the face of self-made success.

THE ENGINE OF THE MAYBACH is silent, but the raffia fringe on Anastasia Soare's Dries Van Noten bolero crunches as she turns into the lot at her West Hollywood office. The sedan's headlights brighten the plaque of her parking spot: RESERVED: CEO, ANASTASIA. When Soare, 60, moved to Los Angeles from Communist Romania 30 years ago, she could only afford to buy a $200 Ford station wagon with a leaky exhaust to shuttle her from her home in the Valley to Beverly Hills, where she worked as an aesthetician. "It was an enormous car," she laughs, her accent throaty and warm. The used Mitsubishi Mirage that followed was no better. "Claudia was so embarrassed," Soare recalls of her daughter's horror during school drop-offs. Today, Anastasia Beverly Hills, the cosmetics empire Anastasia and Claudia have built together, is valued at roughly $3 billion.

Just a few years ago, that number would have seemed staggering for an independent beauty company—something achievable only by tech giants such as Airbnb, WeWork, and Uber, who have all topped the list of "unicorns," a Silicon Valley term used to describe start-ups valued at $1 billion or more. As of January, there were only around 300 unicorns worldwide, and until recently, female-helmed unicorns were almost as mythical as the prestigious list's name. But Soare is at the forefront of a new class of entrepreneurs that is challenging preconceptions about women-led companies and their ability to secure sizable investment (and, subsequently, astronomical valuations). According to a 2018 report, only 14 of the 132 venture-backed unicorns in the United States had female founders; now, more than a third of them are in the beauty space. In addition to Anastasia Beverly Hills, there is reality star turned business tycoon Kylie Jenner's socially driven Kylie Cosmetics; Emily Weiss's direct-to-consumer darling Glossier (pronounced *à la française*); Huda Kattan's Instagram–bred makeup empire, Huda Beauty; and Pat McGrath Labs, the product line from the backstage-beauty veteran.

Yet five years ago, when Weiss first pitched the idea for Glossier, which is now worth $1.2 billion, to investors, the common response was "Oh, beauty, cute!" she recalls. Kirsten Green, the founder and managing director of San Francisco–based Forerunner Ventures, was the exception. "A category that is mostly acceptable price points with high margins and consumable products—that's a pretty good business setup," says Green, who was the first person to back Glossier. Green points out that the momentum women like Weiss and Soare have created has forced investors to reevaluate what has historically been considered a niche women's space but is on track to grow to $750 billion by 2024. It has also unleashed a harras of unicorn foals—entrepreneurial hopefuls working to emulate this kind of megawatt success in the cosmetics industry and beyond. "Beauty companies have never been considered companies that are changing the world," says Weiss. But they are changing the dynamics of who's in the boardroom.

SOARE BURSTS INTO HER OFFICE like a well-groomed maraca, jacket rustling, stilettos clacking, Cartier love bangles tinkling. "Hello! What's happening?" she asks the receptionist before flinging her mouse-colored Hermès Kelly bag onto a matching velvet swivel chair. Along the Venetian plastered walls are photos of Soare with some of her best clients' husbands: President Obama, David Beckham. Michelle Obama's *Becoming* is propped open to the inscription page: "To my dear friend Anastasia, it has been a blessing having you in my life. . . ."

"Oprah used to be what Instagram is right now," Soare, swiveling, says of her big break on the talk show in 1998 (Winfrey remains a loyal client). More than 13 years later, Claudia persuaded her mother to pivot from the brick-and-mortar brow salon that begat a range of popular eyebrow products to social-media—a strategic move that many insiders credit for her current status as the mother of unicorns. (Soare's reputation as a mentor is nearly as widespread as her success as a brand-builder.) The younger Soare, 30, cultivated makeup-obsessed micro-influencers by sending them new products to post, and buying them Sony 6 cameras—and ring lights—to heighten the quality of CONTINUED ON PAGE 147

MYTH MAKERS

Achieving "unicorn status" has become the goal for a new generation of female entrepreneurs using the beauty industry as a case study for brand-building.

THE LADY AND THE UNICORN: "SIGHT," FRENCH SCHOOL. TAPESTRY, 15TH CENTURY. MUSÉE NATIONAL DU MOYEN ÂGE ET DES THERMES DE CLUNY, PARIS. BRIDGEMAN IMAGES.

SCARLET FEVER

There's a romantic sense of dishabille to model Karen Elson's **Marni** look, from the plummeting neckline of her top ($1,150) to the sarong-like tartan-plaid skirt ($2,950). Marni boots. All at Marni stores.

Fashion Editor: Sara Moonves.

RAD PLAID

Models Joan Smalls (NEAR RIGHT) and Gemma Ward are good and ready for autumn in on-the-grid overcoats. Smalls wears a **Max Mara** coat ($4,090), blazer (worn underneath coat, $1,960), turtleneck ($525), and skirt ($665); Max Mara, NYC. Ward wears a **Dior** coat, top, and skirt; Dior stores. On both: Boots by **The Row**.

Check, Please

From tartan to gingham and houndstooth, new pattern plays are giving shape—and adding a bold graphic punch—to the day-to-evening wardrobe. Photographed by Annie Leibovitz.

SQUARING OFF
Swathed in **JW Anderson**'s gingham-patterned blanket coat ($1,850) and belt (both at jwanderson.com), model Kesewa Aboah calls to mind Studio 54–era Diana Ross looking every bit "The Boss."

GREAT LENGTHS
Gigi Hadid invests charmingly bookish separates with an easy, slouchy softness. **Loro Piana** coat and pants ($1,925); Loro Piana, NYC. **Charvet** shirt, $436; charvet.com. **Eric Javits** hat. **Salvatore Ferragamo** clog boots.

DOUBLE CROSSERS
With retooled proportions, prep-school plaids are transformed into sophisticated statement pieces. FROM FAR LEFT: Model Anna Ewers wears an **Etro** blazer ($2,480), shirt ($1,010), and pants ($660). Blazer and pants at nordstrom.com. Shirt at Etro stores. **Michael Kors Collection** boots. Model Fei Fei Sun wears a **Ralph Lauren Collection** coat, $4,550; select Ralph Lauren stores. **Polo Ralph Lauren** pants, $328; ralphlauren.com. **Chloé** boots.

CUDDLE UP
A plush **Marc Jacobs** cape coat with an attached scarf ($3,600; marcjacobs.com)—seen here on model Karlie Kloss—is as easy on the eyes as it is to wear. (The only impossible part, really, is taking it off.)

SOFT POWER
Scarf dressing is back—but shimmery, wildly ornamental silks have been replaced by cozy knits and fringed wool. Model Paloma Elsesser wears a **Salvatore Ferragamo** sweater ($1,050) and skirt ($990); Salvatore Ferragamo stores.

TOP OF THE LINE
A feminine twist on menswear? Don't mind if she does. Model Adut Akech wears a **Chanel** blouse edged with delicate ruffles ($2,000; select Chanel stores) and **Weekend Max Mara** pants ($335; Weekend Max Mara, White Plains, NY).

ALL DOWN THE LINES

Play your plaids straight—or pair them up any way you please. FROM FAR LEFT: Model Abby Champion wears a **Dolce & Gabbana** blazer ($2,845) and pants ($1,145); select Dolce & Gabbana stores. Model Rebecca Longendyke wears a **Rokh** bralette, top, skirt, gloves, and leggings; rokh.net. Model Ariel Nicholson wears an **Alexander McQueen** coat and belt; Alexander McQueen, NYC. Model Andreja Pejić wears a **Stella McCartney** coat, $2,595; Stella McCartney, NYC. **The Row** shirt, $690; The Row, NYC. **Michael Kors Collection** pants, $490; michaelkors.com.

BENEATH THE BELTS
Two takes on late-summer suiting reveal just a few of the tailored jacket's facets—from elegant esteem to quiet rebellion. FROM NEAR RIGHT: Model Anok Yai wears a **Givenchy** blazer ($3,585) and pants ($1,430); Givenchy, NYC. Model Fran Summers wears a **Louis Vuitton** jacket, blouse, skirt, and belt; select Louis Vuitton stores.

GREEN STREAK

With a bolt of green—and rivulets of fiery red—a houndstooth skirt set serves up nostalgia with a twist. Model Tess McMillan wears a **Gucci** jacket ($3,700) and skirt ($1,600); gucci.com. **Givenchy** shirt, $1,140: Givenchy, NYC. In this story: hair, Esther Langham; makeup, Aaron de Mey. Details, see In This Issue.

SET DESIGN BY MARY HOWARD STUDIO

HANG TIME Model Ugbad Abdi is ashimmer in a many-spangled **Paco Rabanne** earring ($890) and printed shirtdress ($760); pacorabanne.com. **Alberta Ferretti** lace top, $3,295; Barneys New York, NYC. **Blue by Betsey Johnson** evening wrap, worn as hair scarf. OPPOSITE: Model Lineisy Montero turns over a sleek new leaf with a **Louis Vuitton** earring and dress; select Louis Vuitton stores.

Fashion Editor: Jorden Bickham.

Whether studded or spiked, pearly or petaled, the singular statement earring remains a sure sign of punchy panache. Photographed by Jackie Nickerson.

All in One

TWIST AND SHOUT
Model Nora Attal tries the wild-child look on for size—and finds that its tangle of silvery swoops and daring spikes suits her just fine. **Altuzarra** studded hoop earring; altuzarra.com. **Marc Jacobs** ear cuff, $175; marcjacobs.com. **Hoorsenbuhs** necklace, worn in hair, $3,500; Hoorsenbuhs, Santa Monica. **Alexander McQueen** harness and dress; Alexander McQueen, NYC.

PEARL WONDER
The rib-grazing reach of model Indira Scott's **Tasaki** earring (tasaki-global.com) feels as exuberantly loopy as the chains of her **Marni** dress (Marni stores) feel coolly grounded. **David Yurman** necklace, worn in hair, $335; davidyurman.com.

IN THE LOOP
The picture-perfect punk princess, model Hiandra Martinez goes rogue in a stack of hoops, cuffs, chokers, and chains by **Alexander McQueen**; Alexander McQueen, NYC. **Salvatore Ferragamo** slip dress; Salvatore Ferragamo stores. **Fendi** lace-knit sweater, $1,190; fendi.com.

BEAUTY NOTE
Balance embellishment with a sleek silhouette. Vernon François Braid and Locs Scalp Nourish~Ment Spray relieves dry roots and adds sheen to intricate styles.

END OF YOUR TETHER
No need to buckle up—this artful bijou from **Loewe** ($265; Ikram, Chicago) promises a smooth (and stylish) ride. **Prada** lace cape ($2,690), sweater ($920), and shirt ($980); select Prada stores. **Charvet** scarf. In this story: hair, Jawara; makeup, Emi Kaneko. Details, see In This Issue.

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Razzle, Dazzle

Glittering diamanté embellishments lend sultry summer dressing a flash of brilliance.

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PRODUCTS: COURTESY OF BRANDS/WEBSITES. DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE.

FOR KICKS
MODEL JOAN SMALLS WEARS JIMMY CHOO BOOTS; JIMMYCHOO.COM. BALENCIAGA DRESS, $1,950; BALENCIAGA, NYC. CHRISTOPHER KANE EARRING.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CASS BIRD. FASHION EDITOR: TABITHA SIMMONS.

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1. BKR GLASS WATER BOTTLE, $195; MYBKR.COM. **2.** VERONICA BEARD TOP, $450; VERONICABEARD.COM. **3.** ALEXANDER WANG BAG, $695; BERGDORFGOODMAN.COM. **4.** PAULA CADEMARTORI FLAT, $580; PAULACADEMARTORI.COM. **5.** TORY BURCH DRESS, $698; TORYBURCH.COM. **6.** BRUNELLO CUCINELLI JACKET; BRUNELLO CUCINELLI, NYC. **7.** BVLGARI EARRINGS; (800) BVLGARI. **8.** NATURA BISSÉ DIAMOND EXTREME OIL, $165; NATURABISSE.COM. **9.** DOLCE & GABBANA BOOT, $1,545; SELECT DOLCE & GABBANA STORES. **10.** CA&LOU NECKLACE, $325; CAANDLOU.COM. **11.** ROGER VIVIER BAG, $1,795; ROGERVIVIER.COM. **12.** FENDI BOOT; FENDI.COM. **13.** KATE SPADE NEW YORK SKIRT, $298; KATESPADE.COM.

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LUCKY CHARM
HAILEY BIEBER WEARS THE ATTICO BOOTS; THEATTICO.COM. BALMAIN JACKET AND JEANS ($1,274); BALMAIN, NYC. DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE.

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HAIR, WARD STEGERHOEK. MAKEUP, GUCCI WESTMAN. PRODUCED BY FREEBIRD PRODUCTIONS; SET DESIGN BY HANS MAHARAWAL. PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE PLAZA HOTEL. DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE.

THE PRESENT IS FEMALE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 94

fully independent operation whose employees, she says, are 70 percent female. "We definitely celebrate women having babies here," she says. "I think there used to be an industry joke: 'If you're going to get pregnant in the fashion industry, go work for Stella McCartney.' That's a joke I'm very proud of."

One woman working her way up through corporate design studios at the time remembers how a brand—she is tactful not to say which—was astonished when she got pregnant. "No woman who had a baby had ever worked there as a designer," she says. "They had to institute a whole company maternity policy—because of me."

Philo, though, was the one who really charted a new path for mothers in fashion (and for women designers who want to produce "wearable" wardrobes). After revolutionizing what "girls" wanted to wear at Chloé, she went on to electrify women at Céline—while taking three breaks to have her children. The first time, in 2005, created a gossip furor: She'd broken the male-fostered work-around-the-clock star-designer tradition—and she didn't want to pretend she'd designed collections while she was away. "I don't have anything to be ashamed about," she said. "I had a baby! I mean, what *do* people expect?"

Seen down the long barrel of history, fashion is looking very different from a decade ago when, on the upswell of Michelle Obama's leadership, wearing dresses and print and color became a symbol of liberation. To meet our severely different times, female designers are now making versatile clothes that last—a welcome help in the battle against wastefulness and a movement toward spareness and economy that has suddenly brought about an inspirational 21st-century reconnection with the aesthetics of heritage design.

You see it in the pure, monastic grace of The Row, in the all-American craftsmanship of Bode's recycled collection, and in the pared-down tailored designs that have taken off sensationally in Hearst's business. "If I'm making a coat," Hearst says, "it's going to be a coat that you'll be wearing in ten years—a coat that lasts." The considered tailoring of Grace Wales Bonner—a young British-Jamaican designer—aims to spotlight the intellectual culture of the African diaspora. "As a woman," she says, "I approach dressing as a devotional, emotional, and soulful act." It's all part of the revolutionary picture of a new generation putting human values at the center of fashion.

A pause to celebrate, then—and to wonder: What's to come? Hope that transparency and mutual respect will extend to include all the workers—men and women—who make our clothes; that more voices of women of color rise up in the industry; and that, eventually, everyone slows down enough to see that taking pleasure in fashion is not a race.

Does that all seem a long way off? Well: That we can even imagine these things is down to what women have already done. □

MADAM PRESIDENT?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 103

we discuss righteous anger and misogyny, Gillibrand tells me her husband, Jonathan, and their sons, Theodore and Henry, are meeting her while she campaigns in Iowa to shop for an RV to drive around this summer. "The nice thing about an RV is you have a fridge filled with food!"

The day I meet Senator Klobuchar for coffee in D.C., she and Harris have just eviscerated Attorney General William P. Barr over his handling of special counsel Robert Mueller's report, 24 hours earlier—and Klobuchar (a former prosecutor, like Harris) still seems pumped. For the first time since she declared her candidacy, cable-news pundits have begun to (temporarily) theorize that the Democrats *need* that type of polite, female ferocity on a debate stage against Trump.

Klobuchar shrugs when I ask if the political theater of the Barr hearings has brought in campaign donations. She doesn't know. But she is eager—invigorated, even—to dissect how she interrogates a witness. "I have a habit of asking straightforward questions, and one of the keys is not to pontificate, to ask quickly, but normally, and then let them kind of hang there," Klobuchar says.

It's impossible not to be reminded of her exchange with Justice Brett Kavanaugh last fall, the charged back-and-forth in which Klobuchar asked Kavanaugh if he'd ever been blackout drunk (and he peevishly replied, "Have you?"). Many women viewed the exchange as sexist. Klobuchar did not. "He was rude to other senators, so I really didn't see it that way," she says. "I just wanted to keep my own credibility and the credibility of our Senate and our justice system." Soon after, she again found herself in the midst of a debate over the sexist treatment of female politicians. Several tough news stories portrayed the Minnesota senator as an exacting boss who had mistreated her staff, "subjecting them to bouts of explosive rage and regular humiliation," BuzzFeed News reported. The stories led some women, including members of Klobuchar's own staff, to argue that the criticism was rooted in gendered stereotypes. Jennifer Palmieri, the communications director on Clinton's 2016 campaign, wrote in Politico that the same behavior by men would be considered "a badge of honor, not a mark of shame," and noted the tough treatment of staff by Bill Clinton, Senator Chuck Schumer, and Rahm Emanuel. "We still hold women in American politics to higher standards than men, which puts added pressure on female bosses," she wrote.

I want to dive into this with Klobuchar, but I've heard in advance that she would prefer not to discuss a topic that has already consumed so much of her early presidential campaign. So I save it for my penultimate question: Was the coverage of her managerial style sexist? "You guys can decide that. I'm doing my campaign," Klobuchar says, and then—Minnesota politely— signals to an aide that it is about time to wrap things up.

The thing about electability is that no one is electable until they're elected. There was, of course, a time when the experts deemed a Catholic, a divorced actor, a black man, and a reality-TV star with a questionable business background unelectable.

Warren, in particular, has, in the months I worked on this story, gone through several election life cycles. She was declared politically dead after an ill-advised DNA test, and then, by sheer grit and the force of her ideas, pulled her way back into the race, calling for Trump's impeachment,

boycotting Fox News, and introducing so many policy plans that, in a viral Twitter moment, she even promised to answer the comedian Ashley Nicole Black's plea to devise a plan to fix her love life. For women candidates so often handicapped by their wonkiness, Warren has managed to own her intellect, adopting the slogan WARREN HAS A PLAN FOR THAT—as if policy prescriptions rather than Twitter insults could be a feasible way to take on Trump. As we go to press, Warren leads the other women in the race in most polls and is ahead of all the male candidates except Biden and (depending on the day) Sanders.

She and I have been talking in her D.C. living room for about 45 minutes when an aide pokes her head out of a study and says, "Senator, conference call. . . ." "Be there in five!" Warren responds. Five, then ten minutes, pass, and, after a couple more pleas from her aide, Warren finally springs up to walk me out. We are in the hall, headed toward the elevators, and she is still making her case for universal child care. ("We need to make this the same way we invest in roads and bridges.") I know she doesn't like to talk about the horse race, but I finally ask about her surge in the polls, about whether she thinks she can really win this thing, and Warren just swats the air as if she were shooing her golden retriever Bailey off the sofa. "You know, it is this moment in American history where the foundations of democracy are under attack and democracy is rebuilding, right from the ground up," Warren says. Then she pushes the down button, concerned that I make my train to relieve the babysitter. □

LOVE AND LOSS

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from me because trauma tells me that they will be, you know what I mean?"

Grande grew up in Boca Raton, Florida, in a gated community of expensive and lushly planted Mediterranean-style homes. Her mother, Joan Grande, Brooklyn-born and Barnard-educated, owns a business selling marine communications equipment; her father, Edward Butera, is a graphic designer. The couple divorced when Grande was eight. Ariana grew up in character, in a household that relished characters. The theme of her third birthday party was *Jaws.* She loved to run around the house in a Jason mask, and at Halloween, Joan liked to buy animal organs and leave them floating in dishes. "My family is eccentric and weird and loud and Italian," Grande says. "There was always this fascination with the macabre. My mom is goth. Her whole wardrobe is modeled after Cersei Lannister's. I'm not kidding. I'm like, 'Mom, why are you wearing epaulets? It's Thanksgiving.' "

Grande declared herself early. Joan recalls a car ride when Ariana was around three and a half; NSYNC was playing, and over and over the little girl perfectly matched JC Chasez's high notes. There was a karaoke machine at home, and everyone—Ariana, her older half-brother, Frankie, and her mother—was always singing. "The soundtrack was Whitney, Madonna, Mariah, Celine, Barbra," she recalls. "All the divas. Gay, divas, divas, gay, belting divas." Joan also played a lot of Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, and the family watched old musicals, especially the Judy Garland–Mickey Rooney pictures. "She was so intrigued by how pristine and precise these women were," Joan recalls. "She studied them carefully." When the family loved a show, they could be obsessive; Joan estimates that they saw *Jersey Boys* on Broadway close to 60 times.

Grande has a preternatural gift for impersonating other singers and actresses—a talent that has made her a surprise darling of the nighttime-television circuit. (After watching her host *Saturday Night Live* three years ago, Steven Spielberg texted Lorne Michaels to sing her praises.) Grande credits her healthy vocal technique to having learned to mimic Celine Dion, in particular, whose seamless blending through her registers and careful vocal placement have given her greater durability than many of her peers. "I learned how to make it sound like I was belting and being loud without actually belting and being loud," Grande explains. "The voice is expensive, and if you're spending it properly, you'll be able to keep spending it." When I tell her that I'm surprised by her interest in Judy Garland—not an obvious source of inspiration for a pop artist born nearly 25 years after her death—she cradles her arms in a manner that immediately brings the legend to mind. "I would stand in front of the TV and mimic her body movements. I was always fascinated. She carried herself in a way that was so protected and soft and Judy."

After years of local children's theater, Grande landed a role in the Broadway musical *13*. (She was 14 at the time.) Weeks after the musical closed, she was cast as the goofy sidekick Cat Valentine on the Nickelodeon show *Victorious,* which made her a star with the tween set. "I never really saw myself as an actress," she says, "but when I started talking about wanting to make R&B music at 14, they were like, 'What the fuck would you sing about? This is never going to work. You should audition for some TV shows and build yourself a platform and get yourself out there, because you're funny and cute and you should do that until you're old enough to make the music you want to make.' So I did that. I booked that TV show, and then I was like, OK, *now* can I make music?" While *Victorious* marched on, in her free time Grande liked to upload YouTube videos of herself singing covers of Adele, Whitney Houston, and Mariah Carey. It was a virtuoso rendition of Carey's "Emotions," which Grande posted in August 2012, when she was 19, that made her a hot property. Since then she has worked at a frantic pace, turning out five albums in six years, all of them certified platinum, and touring the world three times.

If one aspect of Grande's career has been immune to critique, it's her singing. Patti LaBelle came to know her several years ago, when Grande asked the R&B icon to perform at her birthday party. They have become friends. "She's surpassed her peers," LaBelle says. "And she does everything herself, which is not always the way with the young baby girls. She doesn't need any machines. She's a baby who's able to sing like an older black woman." LaBelle, whose four-year-old granddaughter, Gia, wears an Ariana ponytail, recalls the time when both singers performed for the Obamas at the Women of Soul concert at the White House. Grande was extremely nervous. "I said, 'Girl, you're a beast. Go up there and sing like that white-black woman you are.' Ariana can sing me under the table—and listen, I can sing."

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Grande's personal style has left her more vulnerable. Some critics have chafed at her uniform of bubblegum lampshade dresses and thigh-high boots, with their uneasy mix of sybarite and schoolgirl—as if she were the contrivance of a horny industry Humbert. She is not. "She's like an R-rated version of a Disney character, super-vivid," says Pharrell Williams, who produced much of *Sweetener* and clocked long hours in the studio with Grande pre- and post-Manchester. "But she's full of self-awareness. That meta-cognition is part of her personality." To those troubled by her image, Grande has a silencing reply: She just likes it. "I like having my funny character that I play," she explains, "that feels like this exaggerated version of myself. It protects me. But also I love disrupting it for the sake of my fans and making clear that I'm a person—because that's something I enjoy fighting for. I can't help disrupt it. I'm incredibly impulsive and passionate and emotional and just reckless. The music is very personal and very real, but yes, if you can be me for Halloween, if drag queens can dress up as me, then I'm a character. Go to your local drag bar, and you'll see it. That's, like, the best thing that's ever happened to me. It's better than winning a Grammy." (Incidentally, Grande won her first Grammy this year, when *Sweetener* was awarded Best Pop Vocal Album.)

While the character has been remarkably consistent across her career, Grande feels it's only in the last year that she has been able to make the music she has always wanted to make. "There was a two-album period where I was doing half the songs for me and half the songs to solidify my spot in pop music," she acknowledges. "A lot of my singles have been hilariously lacking in substance. You're talking to someone who put 'Side to Side' out as a single. I love that song, but it's just a fun song about sex." I ask her if it ever feels uncomfortable to gaze out at an audience of thousands of nine-year-old girls while singing a song about having so much coitus that it's hard to walk straight. "They're for sure gonna have it. I promise. I promise that your kid's gonna have sex. So if she asks you what the song's about, talk about it." One clever aspect of *Thank U, Next* is the way it coaxes out your most cynical notions about Grande, then forces you to reevaluate them. Consider the three singles that ruled February: "Break Up with Your Girlfriend, I'm Bored," "7 Rings," and the title track. A song ostensibly about female rivalry is in fact about self-love; a paean to materialism celebrates sisterhood; and what sounds like it will be a haughty diss track turns out to be a reflection on the importance of gratitude and reappraisal.

It's tempting to think of Manchester as the inflection point in Grande's career, though she shrinks from any narrative about the bombing that might place her at its center. "It's not my trauma," she says as tears fill her eyes. "It's those families'. It's their losses, and so it's hard to just let it all out without thinking about them reading this and reopening the memory for them." She pauses to collect herself. "I'm proud that we were able to raise a lot of money with the intention of giving people a feeling of love or unity, but at the end of the day, it didn't bring anyone back. Everyone was like, Wow, look at this amazing thing, and I was like, What the fuck are you guys talking about? We did the best we could, but on a totally real level we did nothing. I'm sorry. I have a lot to say that could probably help people that I do want to share, but I have a lot that I still need to process myself and will probably never be ready to talk about. For a long time I didn't want to talk to anyone about anything, because I didn't want to think about anything. I kind of just wanted to bury myself in work and not focus on the real stuff, because I couldn't believe it was real. I loved going back into the studio with Pharrell because he just has this magical outlook on everything. He truly believes that the light is coming. And I'm like, Bruh, is it, though?"

Since Manchester, Grande has emerged as an outspoken advocate of gun control, singing at last year's March for Our Lives, organized by the survivors of the Parkland massacre. She flew from Hong Kong to Charlottesville on the last day of her *Dangerous Woman* tour to perform in A Concert for Charlottesville, a response to the Unite the Right rally. She is passionately pro-LGBTQ and passionately anti–Donald Trump at a time when many of her peers have chosen to remain silent about politics lest they alienate a segment of their fan base. "I would rather sell fewer records and be outspoken about what I think is some fuckery than sell more records and be . . . Switzerland. Am I allowed to say that? I love Switzerland. The fake wokes are waiting to attack!"

The studio remains Grande's safe haven. When Miller died, her friends—Tommy, the singer Victoria Monet, her childhood best friend, Aaron Gross, and others—gathered around her in New York, where she had been living. Somebody pointed out that Jungle City Studios was right around the corner from her apartment. "My friends know how much solace music brings me, so I think it was an all-around, let's-get-her-there type situation," she recalls. "But if I'm completely honest, I don't remember those months of my life because I was (a) so drunk and (b) so sad. I don't really remember how it started or how it finished, or how all of a sudden there were 10 songs on the board. I think that this is the first album and also the first year of my life where I'm realizing that I can no longer put off spending time with myself, just as me. I've been boo'd up my entire adult life. I've always had someone to say goodnight to. So *Thank U, Next* was this moment of self-realization. It was this scary moment of 'Wow, you have to face all this stuff now. No more distractions. You have to heal all this shit.' "

Tommy Brown believes that *Thank U, Next* is Grande's inner life set to a trap beat. "We were in that studio to throw paint around," he recalls. "We weren't thinking about an album. We were drinking a lot of champagne and, I think, doing a lot of therapy with each other. That album is so real because Ari makes her music in the real time of what's happening in her life." When I ask Grande whether it is fair to call *Thank U, Next* a response to Miller's death, the tears return, along with the reciprocal apologies. Her characteristic heavy eyeliner, flared upward at the edges in the Maria Callas style, never runs. "It's just hard to hear it so plainly put," she says. She has rarely commented on her relationship with Miller and has taken umbrage when the media has sought to define her according to

her romantic relationships. But in May 2018, she made an exception in the form of a widely admired clapback after a fan of Miller's took to Twitter following the rapper's arrest for drunk driving, suggesting that being spurned by Grande was the cause. Her reply was swift and lacerating: "shaming and blaming a woman for a man's inability to keep his shit together is a very major problem. let's please stop doing that."

"People don't see any of the real stuff that happens, so they are loud about what they think happened," she says now. "They didn't see the years of work and fighting and trying, or the love and exhaustion. That tweet came from a place of complete defeat, and you have no idea how many times I warned him that that would happen and fought that fight, for how many years of our friendship, of our relationship. You have no idea so you're not allowed to pull that card, because you don't fucking know. That's where that came from." Grande spent years consumed by worry about Miller. Friends with her during the *Dangerous Woman* tour recall a woman up at all hours, desperately tracking his whereabouts to ensure he wasn't on a bender. "It's pretty all-consuming," she says of her grief over Miller. "By no means was what we had perfect, but, like, fuck. He was the best person ever, and he didn't deserve the demons he had. I was the glue for such a long time, and I found myself becoming . . . less and less sticky. The pieces just started to float away."

Grande has since backed off from using social media to unload her feelings, instead mainly posting benignly glamorous images of ponytails and photos of her dogs (she has seven, as well as a miniature potbelly pig called Piggy Smalls). This is an about-face for a woman who has become actual friends with her fans through Twitter, who has been known to direct-message them bars of music before she has shared them with the folks at her label. "Everyone thinks I'm crazy for doing it, but I care about what they have to say more than I care about what anyone at my label has to say, no offense," she explains. "This is a me-and-them thing. I'm not taking one of those corny breaks from social media where you're like, 'The internet hurts me, I'm leaving, goodbye.' But I've definitely established a new boundary. I don't want to get myself into some shit." Joan says that she and her daughter have talked a lot about the maintenance of boundaries lately. Ariana has always been an empath. "She has a way of taking on everyone's pain," Joan says. "She functions really beautifully, but when she has to laser herself to those heartbreaking moments, I don't think she can find anything but tears. Sure, I worry about her, but I always tell her, how you're feeling right now is perfect."

One of the more puzzling chapters of Grande's public life was her short-lived engagement to Davidson last year, a kamikaze move made in the haze of her breakup with Miller. Her friends had convinced her to decamp to New York, to escape L.A. and her patterns there. "My friends were like, 'Come! We're gonna have a fun summer.' And then I met Pete, and it was an amazing distraction. It was frivolous and fun and insane and highly unrealistic, and I loved him, and I didn't know him. I'm like an infant when it comes to real life and this old soul, been-around-the-block-a-million-times artist. I still don't trust myself with the life stuff."

Art is made richer through experience, of course, and Grande has never made better art—or sold more records—than when she decided to make music out of the bitter history of the last two years. But it's nice to get away from oneself now and then: She is currently writing and producing the soundtrack to the upcoming film reboot of *Charlie's Angels,* will costar in Ryan Murphy's Netflix adaptation of the Broadway musical *The Prom*—and there's a big acting job she's hoping to land, though she doesn't want to jinx it.

"I have this idea of what I'd like to be," she says. "I can see this stronger, amazing, fearless version of myself that one day I hope to evolve into. Sometimes I try to be that for my fans before I actually am that myself. I think I've been avoiding putting in the work. You know how that gets: You push your therapist away at some point, but then you have to get back to it." She musters a laugh. "Do you know a good therapist?" □

RUN THE WORLD: AMY SHERALD

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"and see performers and performances created by people who look like you."

Sherald was born and raised in Columbus, Georgia, the third of four children. Her father was a dentist, but when Sherald was seven, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, which ended his practice. "We were doing well, and then we were not doing well, because there was no money," she says. To make ends meet, her all-conquering mother, who had been a housewife, became a bank manager, and Sherald took over a lot of the housework and looked after her younger brother, Michael. "Our house had woods behind it, so we'd walk back there and explore and set traps for raccoons and do crazy stuff." The family went to church every Saturday, a strict fundamentalist sect called the Worldwide Church of God, which forbids celebrating Christmas, Easter, or birthdays, and bans TV from Friday night to Saturday night.

She was introduced to art through the family's encyclopedia, where she would study reproduced paintings. At school, she was the only black kid in her class, and she stayed at her desk during recess because she liked to draw in a quiet room. She took private lessons from her school art teacher straight through to 12th grade. But when she announced that she wanted to be an artist, both her parents balked—they wanted her to be a doctor. She became a premed student at Clark Atlanta University, but at the start of her junior year, she changed her major to fine art. "I had to do it," she says. "I came out from under the thumb of my mother, shaved my head, started dressing grunge, got a labret" (a piercing below the lower lip). She moved to Maryland for her M.F.A., and spent a few months after she graduated apprenticing in Norway with Odd Nerdrum. And then, instead of heading for New York, as most M.F.A. grads do, she returned to Baltimore, which would be her home base, off and on, for the next 13 years.

Becoming an artist, for Sherald, was a long battle against heavy odds—there was her own health and her brother's death, and in 2005, her mother had asked her to return to Georgia to help care for her ailing aunts. That trip turned into a four-year stay. When she finally returned to Baltimore, she waitressed five nights a week to pay for her $300-a-month studio in a boarded-up old car garage that had no air-conditioning or

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heat. She would paint in her underwear in the summer and freeze in the winter, working until her fingers got numb. And then, in 2016, recognition started to come: $25,000 for winning the National Portrait Gallery competition; her first museum solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; a mural commission in Philadelphia; Michelle Obama's portrait.

We meet again four days later, at the Crosby Street Hotel in downtown Manhattan. Sherald arrives right on time, pulling up in a bright-yellow Kia. Her hyper-efficient studio manager and life organizer, Alexander Dorr, is waiting on the curb to park the car, and she steps out wearing a stylish vintage leopard coat with black leather pants by Theory. Clothes are a major element in her paintings—she outfits her subjects in bold patterns (wide, bright-colored stripes, polka dots, geometric shapes), which she picks up on eBay and in secondhand stores.

The first time we met, Sherald had spoken mainly about her past, but today she's more forward-thinking and tells me that she and Kevin plan to get married. (She's already picked out her wedding dress.) Sherald had settled into the idea that she would never have children, but meeting Kevin changed that. They've started going to a fertility clinic. "In my mind, Kevin was the banker with the fast car and all the chicks," she says, "and I was just the artist from Baltimore who was a waitress. I have a little bit of an impostor syndrome. My life has changed, but I'm still a little black girl from the South, raised in a small town, who grew up in a church that was kind of weird. I'm not going to take myself too seriously, because I realize it just kind of happened. I worked hard, it came, and this is a fun ride." I can't resist asking if she would consider another commission. "Not unless it's Meghan Markle," she says, laughing. Keoma, the dog nanny, arrives and drops off August Wilson, who takes residence under the table. Sherald orders a plate of chicken for him—"no seasonings." He turns up his nose at it.

Toward the end of lunch, Sherald tells me about a pivotal moment in her career. In 2007, she came to New York to see Kara Walker's retrospective at the Whitney Museum. "It was riveting and amazing and disturbing in all the right ways," she tells me, "but afterward I was trying to process it within my own experience, the experience of a black girl growing up in the South—because she also grew up there. And I realized in that moment there was no conversation happening around just black people being black. It was everything but that. Culturally we're presented in one way. It's like, Africa, slave boat, slave, civil rights, President Obama." She bursts out laughing. "And that's supposed to be the happy ending. But there are so many different tropes of who we are, and how we exist, and all that needs to be expressed, as well." Any life, she came to realize, is filled with multiple narratives, some of them quite frivolous. "Nothing about black history or black American culture is frivolous. Everything is so serious; we all still carry the shackle of history. But when I was in the hospital, feeling the imminence of death . . . I wanted to know who I really was, without all the gender and racial restrictions."

As she speaks, I think back to a photograph I'd seen pinned to the wall in her studio—two young couples in bathing suits at the beach, the women riding on the men's shoulders, beside a beach umbrella whose gay red and white stripes echo the ones on the nearest man's trunks. The image will be one of the big paintings in her New York debut show. It's a happy, lighthearted scene—not a whiff of angst, but an authentic part of her story. □

RUN THE WORLD: WENDY WHELAN

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at NYCB. "I don't want to infiltrate their studio space," she says.

This kind of emotional intelligence is playing out in almost all aspects of Whelan's agenda. When we speak, she was in the process of planning the company's 2020–2021 season and has embarked on what she's calling a listening tour. "I've just been trying to be careful about not disrupting things that don't need disrupting," she says. But better communication, better feedback between the dancers and their superiors, is crucial. "In my whole 30 years in New York City Ballet, I rarely interacted with my boss except on the stage," she says. "I never knew where I was in his eyes or other people's eyes, so I was just guessing, along with everybody else." One should understand the dancers' experience more holistically: "We put ballets on really, really fast. People are learning like lightning, and sometimes we forget that those people are, maybe, having a hard time, that they're 18 years old and they're stressed-out." She's also interested in keeping a dialogue open with retired dancers like Mimi Paul, Suzanne Farrell, and Adam Luders, who know the choreography better than anyone else. "Mimi couldn't give the information for years," Whelan says. "She just wasn't invited to give it."

For her part, Whelan brings an intimate knowledge of the company's repertoire (she originated more than 40 principal roles). "Wendy has an unparalleled level of experience," Stafford, himself a former dancer, tells me. And her work ethic is legendary. "There isn't anybody who worked harder than she did," says one of the company's star principal dancers, Tiler Peck. But she also brings a receptiveness that extends beyond the insular world of ballet. "I think it's one of my strengths, having a real connectivity with the outside dance world," Whelan says. Although she lives near Lincoln Center on the Upper West Side ("the dance belt," she calls it), her husband of almost 14 years, the artist David Michalek, is not from the performing-arts world. The two met in their 20s when Michalek was hired to photograph her for *Lear's* magazine. "I opened the door to some studio and just saw the most handsome man I've ever seen in my life," Whelan recalls. "I was like, 'Well, who's the photographer?' Because you're obviously too young." The two are sounding boards for each other: "He sees things in dance that I don't normally see because I live in it. And then I see things in his art that he wouldn't normally see."

A few weeks after our interview, Amar Ramasar, one of the male dancers dismissed in the photo-sharing scandal, is reinstated to the company. "He's had some time to prepare him to enter the new environment that we're in," Whelan explains when I get in touch to ask about his reintegration. "It's very different than when he left." But for her, the future is primarily about what unfolds onstage. She's interested in giving female choreographers

who've been working on a smaller scale a bigger venue. At the same time, she wants to explore a sense of scale: "We danced in the MoMA recently," she tells me. "I like that idea—that rather than being so far and distant across the orchestra pit, the audience can see the more human aspect of what we are and what we do." And then there are the dancers themselves: "We're filling up our ranks with all different kinds of people, bodies, colors. There's not one idea about New York City Ballet like there was a generation ago, when it was all tall, skinny, mostly white people." Perhaps the most important shift of all will occur in the way she's likely to match dancing partners. "Part of the beauty of Balanchine's work was that the man leads the woman," she says. "But in the work I've done for the company in the past 20 years or so, there is an equal partnership. I hold my own with the man." □

UNICORNS ARE REAL

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their photography. Using the platform to communicate directly with customers about everything from how to use their best-selling brow kit to product launches that were modeled after Nike shoe drops, the Soares created a sense of organic engagement in an industry whose primary means of communicating with its customers was overcrowded department-store gondolas. She and Claudia still approve every post, and Anastasia spends at least four hours a day on the app, mostly responding to personal messages. Anastasia Beverly Hills had the highest-earning Instagram in 2018 according to Tribe Dynamics, which tracks impressions that can lead to online sales. The account currently boasts more than 19 million followers, and it has become a case study on how to evolve a brand for the age of influence.

"I was always really good at marketing myself on social," says Jen Atkin, the hairstylist who launched Ouai Haircare in 2016 on the back of her editorial work with not one but all five Kardashian-Jenner sisters. She refers to the line of sleekly packaged, jasmine-scented styling aids as "the first socially connected hair-care brand." It's not an inaccurate description. Sitting across from me at WeWork in Downtown LA, where Ouai occupies the penthouse but has spilled down into the two floors below, Atkin, 39, is as disarmingly straightforward in person as she is on Instagram, where she recently posted before-and-after photos of her nose job. As she scrapes the bottom of her Kooshi chia-pudding cup, sparing no detail about her end-of-year burnout and the struggle to balance the demands of her schedule, it becomes clear that the transparency and intimacy she shares, about her life and her brand, are what make her so appealing to her 3 million followers turned customers. (Her as-yet-untitled memoir/self-help book will be published next year.)

Atkin is in the process of moving her growing business into a 6,400-square-foot office across the street from LACMA. "That's our spot to spread out," she says of the space that will accommodate the 10new employees she's currently interviewing, and will feature a "Tulum meets California" design—catnip to millennials. Despite what is widely thought to be double-digit growth since its launch (Atkin won't confirm numbers), Ouai's recent expansion has been catalyzed by an infusion of capital from Los Angeles– and New York-based fund ACG, the first outside investment Atkin has taken (she started the brand with money from personal savings, contributions from family, and one angel investor, a Dubai-based client). "That was a scary time," Atkin confides of deciding whether or not to take on venture-capital funding. "I don't want to call them sharks," she continues of the fund-raising process, "but I had every venture-capital and private-equity company wanting to sit down and talk."

Investment from the wrong or too many partners is a Chinese finger trap that makes even the savviest baby unicorns wary. But with many of them experiencing growth on par with Atkin's, it is an inevitable step for scaling a small business. Companies in a similar position to Ouai—such as makeup artist Charlotte Tilbury's namesake line; Tiffany Masterson's complexion juggernaut Drunk Elephant; Nancy Twine's natural hair-care brand, Briogeo; and Herbivore Botanicals, the beloved vegan skin-care collection from husband-and-wife duo Julia Wills and Alexander Kummerow—are on the precipice of their next phase, be it expanding or considering a sale. ("Obviously we are looking at these companies; we admire these companies," says Carol Hamilton, Group President of Acquisitions at L'Oréal.) "But these investments are like bragging about getting a credit card," Atkin says. "It's like borrowed money, and it's a big weight on your shoulders. I try not to think about the money so much, because if I did, I would get so stressed-out."

That's good advice, according to Moj Mahdara. "I think the media's obsession with valuation is actually leading entrepreneurs down the wrong path," says Mahdara, who has a front-row view of the shifting beauty industry as the CEO of Beautycon, the annual festival-like beauty summit considered the Coachella of cosmetics. Hamilton agrees. "I'm seeing some extraordinary rounds of investments where way too much of a company is given away. That is a major issue for what is going to happen for some of these founders in the future when they finally do decide to sell and have to pay that off."

Tiffany Masterson has navigated this landscape well. The Texas-based mother of four launched Drunk Elephant's range of nontoxic, "clean-compatible" products in 2014 with a single investment, from her brother-in-law, and as of two years ago had taken only minority investments from San Francisco–based private equity firm VMG Partners and fashion blogger Leandra Medine. "I don't see us taking more of that," says Masterson. "I would say the most likely next step would be to sell the company," she admits. This past January, when reports surfaced that a potential sale of Drunk Elephant was in fact on the horizon, beauty behemoths—including Estée Lauder and Unilever—were rumored to have taken meetings. Speculators put the value of the company at around $1 billion, which, if true, would make any future sale one of the largest U.S. beauty deals in recent history. "The only valuation that really matters is the one that you sell your company for," notes Mahdara.

Masterson's popular T.L.C. Sukari Babyfacial and C-Firma Day Serum helped secure initial fans, but she also credits Instagram for her ability to create a lasting, personal connection with her customers, directly and quickly. "It's like having a huge focus group that's CONTINUED ON PAGE 148

telling you at all times what they're wishing for."

"I mean I'm on all day," says Jenner, echoing Masterson's observations. The 21-year-old, who recently dethroned Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg as the world's youngest self-made billionaire, seems dumbfounded when I ask her how much time she spends on social media. "It's all my advertising, how I communicate with my fans, everything," she continues, on a call from her home in Calabasas. Her daughter Stormi, 18 months, is napping in the next room but otherwise attends all Kylie Cosmetics meetings and likes to touch all the products, she tells me. Jenner is fresh off the launch of Kylie Skin, which includes a walnut-face scrub that made national news earlier this summer when fans criticized its harsh exfoliation method (it still sold out in 24 hours). "When I look at how many followers Kylie Skin already has, it's exciting, slash I'm shuddering for anyone else who's in skin right now," says Mahdara of Jenner's ability to engage her community.

There is an addictive quality to feeling a part of something, and transforming what it means to be a customer is essential to how these women have reimagined an industry built on customer transformation. Over the month I spend getting to know these brands and their founders on social media, I am struck by how quickly I become embedded in their culture. I connect with Masterson's Arthurian quest to create a perfect product; I am charmed by Glossier's cheeky, inclusive marketing; and I feel an adrenaline rush setting my phone alarm for the 9 a.m. PST launch of Kylie Skin, and then hitting refresh like a manic hummingbird until the products go live. I look forward to Instagram videos of Atkin's rescue Chihuahua, Roo, and marvel at the artistic potential of Anastasia's limited-edition eye shadow–palette collaboration with *RuPaul's Drag Race* star Alyssa Edwards. (That announcement clocked almost 1.5 million views on Instagram.) I have built relationships with these companies that seem to transcend comment-section conversations and DMs. The connections are personal, the need to nurture them with a constant supply of new products, primal.

The social-media buzz around the latest iteration of Herbivore Botanicals' best-selling Emerald Cannabis Sativa (Hemp) Deep Moisture Glow Oil has led me from Instagram to downtown Seattle on a surprisingly sunny May morning. In a blond-wood, Scandi hipster furniture–filled office, Herbivore cofounder Julia Wills is discussing how the jade-tinted elixir—now available with 100 mg of skin-calming CBD and a number of adaptogenic herbs that I've never heard of but am eager to slather on my face—could potentially feature in their Pride-themed

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rainbow gift set with a small team of employees. Temporary tattoos, with rainbow sparkles, and a Lisa Frank tarot deck are also being considered. "I pulled a death card this morning," Wills announces, knowingly. The room *oohs*, understanding the card's premonition of transformation to come.

Herbivore is indisputably a brand on the verge. Experiential store openings, not unlike the Glossier pop-up taking shape in the Capitol Hill neighborhood where Wills lives with her husband and cofounder, Alex Kummerow, are part of a larger plan that will require outside investment, something that, as yet, the company has not taken. "For the first couple of years, just paying our bills was the goal," says Kummerow, 31, a videographer who cofounded the brand somewhat accidentally when he gifted Wills, then an addiction counselor, a soap-making kit. After three years selling on Etsy, the brand was rolled out at Sephora, which now stocks line extensions including a range of wildly popular botanical face mists and watercolor-hued face oils. Even though the products are currently carried in all Sephora stores in the U.S., Wills's father, Richard , still makes every bar of their original clay and charcoal cleansing soaps.

Kummerow and Wills, 38, have no business background and until recently, no marketing team, but what they lack in industry connections and fund-raising experience, they make up for in authenticity. That word is bandied about so often in the new high-stakes world of beauty brand-building that it can ring hollow. But here, nearly 800 miles away from Silicon Valley—and even farther from Los Angeles's influencer economy—it still means something. Retaining it presents perhaps the greatest challenge to Wills and Kummerow, and to all the baby unicorns who have achieved their success, in large part, by offering a product that seems to stand apart from the corporate mechanisms that have ruled the beauty industry for decades. "We've been in conversation with investors for, like, three years,but we've been really cautious," says Kummerow, who is soft-spoken with lanky, shoulder-length blond hair. "When we scale, we want to make sure it is true to us."

"We want to bring on some top talent, someone to run marketing, maybe a CEO," Wills adds with a refreshing hint of sheepishness. But first, media training. The couple has booked a session the following week in an effort to inch toward Atkin's magnetism, the Soares' salesmanship, and Weiss's mastery at winning over a room of investors. Wills leans forward to open the door for Monty, her poodle rescue, and asks me, in earnest, if I have any good interview tips. Then she smiles and looks down at her iPhone; the image on her lock screen is a cartoon drawing of a purple unicorn, mid-leap. □

In this story: Tailor, Olga Meverden. Manicurist, Betty Fuentes.

RUN THE WORLD
110–111: Caftan, $4,790; personalshopper@odlr.com for information. Mounser free-form single earring ($245) and solar mini hoop earring ($175 for pair); mounser.com. The Row sandals, $1,095; The Row, NYC. Tailor, Leah Huntsinger. **113:** Dress, $3,150; Alexander McQueen, NYC. Tailor, Christy Rilling Studio. Manicurist, Yuko Tsuchihashi. **115:** Sweater, $359; Five One Five, Charlotte, NC. Tailor, Christy Rilling Studio. **116–117:** On Krieger: Dress, $950; floravere.com. On Harris: Jacket ($2,900) and shorts ($980); gucci.com. Tailor, Bonnie Barton.

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120: Boots, $1,150. **121:** On Smalls: Calzedonia tights, $20; calzedonia.com. Boots, $2,100; The Row, NYC. On Ward: Coat, top, and skirt, priced upon request. Boots, $1,495; The Row, NYC. **122:** Belt, $350. **123:** Coat, $7,150. Shirt; Charvet, 011-33-1-4260-3070. Hat, $290; ericjavits.com. Clog boots, $1,050; ferragamo.com. **124:** On Ewers: Boots, $1,200; Michael Kors stores. On Sun: Agnona turtleneck, $1,290; Bergdorf Goodman, NYC. Boots, $1,195; Chloé stores. **128–129:** On Longendyke: Bralette, top, skirt, gloves, and leggings; priced upon request. On Nicholson: Coat (price upon request) and belt ($1,345). Alexander McQueen boots; similar styles at Alexander McQueen, NYC. **130:** On Summers: Jacket, blouse, skirt, and belt; priced upon request. Goldtoe tights, $20; goldtoe.com. In this story: Tailor, Christy Rilling Studio.

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132: Earring, $890 per pair. Evening wrap, similar styles from $35; betseyjohnson.com. **133:** Earring and dress, priced upon request. **134:** Altuzarra studded hoop earring, price upon request. Harness and dress, priced upon request. **134:** Earring, price upon request. Metal-and-silk dress ($10,000) and top ($1,590). **136:** Hoop earrings, ear cuffs, and chokers; priced upon request. Slip dress, price upon request. **137:** Scarf, $246; Charvet, 011-33-1-4260-3070. In this story: Tailor, Christy Rilling Studio. Manicurist, Eri Ishizu.

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LAST LOOK
150: Eden medium python shoulder bag ($6,990) and Eden Nano python bag ($4,890); Givenchy, NYC. Other available styles starting at $1,990; Givenchy, NYC.

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Last Look

Givenchy bags

Leave it to Givenchy's Clare Waight Keller to give women what they really want in a handbag: the option for another handbag. A nano clutch (with detachable straps) affixes to a larger shoulder bag, and, just like that, two become one. They're each dubbed the Eden and, wrapped in luxurious emerald-green python leather, they seem to whisper: Go ahead—carry me.

ARTWORK BY NIKKI MALOOF

DETAILS, SEE IN THIS ISSUE

RIBCAGE JEANS

OUR HIGHEST
HIGH RISE YET.