

VOGUE

SINGAPORE

ISSUE 30

april



CHARLI XCX

BY NICK KNIGHT





DIOR



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Gucci Ancora, Spring Summer 2024
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**SCARLETT JOHANSSON / GALLERIA BAG
STILLS FROM A FILM BY JONATHAN GLAZER**





PRADA



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RICHARD MILLE



RM 07-01

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50-hour power reserve ($\pm 10\%$)
Baseplate and bridges in grade 5 titanium
Variable-geometry rotor
Case and open-link bracelet in white gold set with diamonds

A Racing Machine
On The Wrist

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S/S 2024

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Editor's LETTER

Pop is one topic that never goes out of style. Case in point: our April 2023 issue, themed 'Pop' and with Indonesian singer-songwriter Niki Zefanya gracing the cover, sold out quickly. This year, despite the pressure of having to reinvent, I decided to use the same theme because pop is the one dominant word that brought us global attention. I'm referring, of course, to Taylor Swift's exclusive six-night extravaganza in Singapore for her splashy Eras world tour.

Coming from a city that thrives on the hottest and latest, it is a no-brainer that British-Indian singer-songwriter Charli XCX leads the pack in producing some of the catchiest beats of our generation. Charli exists at the epicentre of pop and, coupled with some of the industry's most sought-after collaborators, has brought her music to a euphoric extreme. To date, she has worked with virtuosos such as DJ Tiësto, Korean boyband phenomenon BTS, Kim Petras and Troye Sivan, just to name a few.

Having her grace our cover couldn't be more timely as Charli prepares to release her sixth album, *Brat*, where she revisits her club girl roots. Geared to be a high-octane, aggressive offering that serves as a voyeuristic commentary on pop culture, she confesses to associate lifestyle editor Chandreyee Ray that the album is going to be confrontational. And because we're no shrinking violets when it comes to collaborations either, we went for gold by enlisting the legendary photographer Nick Knight to capture this jaw-dropping cover shoot (page 120).

On the home front, fashion features writer Bryan Ho speaks to rising singer-songwriter Shazza on the melding of fashion and music for the second instalment of *Vogue* Introduces. "Being a proud *hijabi*, modest fashion reflects many of my personal values and roots. And because fashion is limitless, it allows me to convey my beliefs while staying creative and experimental with my music," Shazza shares (page 26). I also had the

privilege of chatting with the ever-buzzy Korean-American fashion designer, Rok Hwang, the founder of Rokh, on his highly anticipated collaboration with H&M set to drop this month. During an intimate preview in Seoul earlier this year, he shared his specific aesthetic of influences after having been in the fashion business for more than a decade and what he hopes to see within the realm of style in 2024 (page 42).

And to me, when it comes to this year's accessory of desire, pearls rank high on the list thanks to designers like Simone Rocha and Pharrell Williams. Lifestyle writer Jesslyn Lye puts together a glorious spread of romantic-meets-subversive offerings, set to go hand in hand with the goth trend that is ruling the runways right now (page 102).

Speaking of now, associate beauty editor Emily Heng provides an insider's look at some of the biggest movers and shakers in the industry by getting the scoop on the best new beauty products, services and technologies that are brimming with cult potential. I, for one, am big on grey-tone contouring, which I stumbled upon recently. After all, we need a bit of snatching to get through our day-to-day (page 76).

And finally, to encapsulating the spirit of music in its entirety, is a spread by fashion stylist Nicholas See (page 132) lensed at the ultra hipstery Wonderfruit festival in Pattaya, Thailand. It reveals the futuristic sensibilities of spring/summer 2024's most otherworldly offerings while like a necessary trailing beat to finish off a great track, Charli shares her top six favourite anthems to get you twerking on a snap (page 146).

Now go enjoy this 'Boom Clap' of an issue!

Desmond Lim
Editor-in-Chief, Vogue Singapore



Charli XCX wears Bottega Veneta dress and heels

Photographer NICK KNIGHT
Stylist KONCA AYKAN

Make-up LAUREN REYNOLDS/BRYANT ARTISTS
using SUQQU
Hair SOICHI INAGAKI/ART PARTNER



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25-73



Cecilie Bahnsen dress;
Noir Kei Ninomiya
bolero; Molly Goddard
skirt; all from Dover
Street Market Singapore;
earrings and rings,
Shazza's own

Hair, Hazel Tan/Makeup
Entourage using Keune
Haircosmetics; make-up, Lydia
Thong/Makeup Entourage
using Make Up Forever;
photographer's assistant,
Michelle Yap.

SHAZZA

Following the release of her latest hit single ‘All You Really Need (Is Love)’, the Singaporean musician sheds light on honing her craft and melding fashion and music.

Photography ZANTZ HAN
Styling BRYAN HO and NICHOLAS SEE
Words BRYAN HO

“Songwriting is my way of storytelling, and it will always be my first and forever love.” These are words that 23-year-old Shareefa Aminah lives by. The trailblazing local musician goes by her stage moniker Shazza—or Sha, as her friends call her—and has erupted onto the scene in the past year with her eclectic sounds and stirring lyrics. She has amassed a cult following of devoted fans, with her 2023 album titled *Chapter One* garnering well over two million listens on Spotify.

Shares Shazza of her introduction to the music world: “I was exposed to a diverse mix of genres from a young age, which taught me that there are no limits to music. One of my favourite experiences as a creator now is looking at my work and finding traces of the genres I grew up listening to. It’s an irreplaceable feeling.”

A quick glance at Shazza’s Instagram and one might immediately notice that the artist adopts a similar approach when it comes to her dressing. Maximalist and dispersed in aesthetic, her outfits are not shy of clashing prints and bold colours. “I like mixing masculine and feminine silhouettes, and accessorising with unique jewellery,” she muses. Layering is huge for her as well; think a long-sleeved, high-necked top underneath a sleeveless knit sweater, topped off with a silk *hijab*, beaded necklaces and her go-to gold hoops.

Regarding personal style and fashion, Shazza emphasises that there’s a connection to the medium that extends beyond mere appearance. “I am a proud *hijabi* and modest fashion reflects many of my personal values and roots. Fashion is limitless. It means a lot to me as it allows me to convey my beliefs while staying creative and experimental.” She attributes much of her success today to women she looked up to as an adolescent, citing Malaysian singer Yuna and American fashion model Halima Aden as some of her role models. “Seeing her (Aden) on the cover of *Vogue* Arabia made me feel seen, which has made chasing my dreams feel that much more attainable. The power of representation is something I hold close to my heart and I want to be able to do this for other people, too.” ●

POP ART

From political statements to larger-than-life expression, fashion and music have always been intertwined. For *Vogue* Singapore's 'Pop' issue, one editor explores a relationship as old as time.

Words MAYA MENON

The relationship between music, fashion and expression has long been magnified. In March, Taylor Swift's reign descended upon Singapore, resulting in a record-breaking six-day streak that drew fans from Southeast Asia and the world. The superstar's 14 albums and gut-piercing lyrics haven't just inspired a loyal legion of music lovers; among the flurry of excitement, there was a manifestation of outfits paying homage to the various eras of Swift's career—resulting in a strong showing of sparkles, denim, fringe and friendship bracelets. Though currently the biggest pop culture showing of the worlds of music and fashion melding, the relationship between the two mediums has been intertwined for as long as we can remember. But where did the intersection begin?

The answer is as multifaceted as it is hard to singularly define. The beginnings of the relationship might be traced back to the 18th century. The 1820s ushered in romanticism, which was a pendulum swing from the rigidity and logic of the age of Enlightenment. This saw a newfound appreciation for music, art and design. Esteemed fashion historian Jane Ashelford explains this phenomenon in *The Art of Dress: Clothes and Society, 1500-1914*: "The Romantic movement stressed the creative power of the 'shaping spirit of imagination' and was motivated by a desire to escape from the chilly neoclassicism of the turn of the century and the harsh realities of the Industrial Revolution. It manifested itself in dress by an enthusiasm for extrovert personal display and theatrical fashions which, in the 1820s and early 1830s, led to men wearing their clothes with a swaggering bravado and panache."

This creative power and extrovert personal display bled into the realm of music, too. A century later, the bridging of all creative forms became even more apparent—with the kinship between

style and performers (musicians and dancers, for example) being one of the strongest and most apparent indicators of this wave. The '20s featured the commercialisation of jazz music, cementing the genre's links to civil rights and feminism. As a result, shorter hemlines were the go-to, alongside forgoing restrictive undergarments and opting for baggier silhouettes. Speeding past the explosion of teen pop was the cementing of Mod culture as purveyed by British youth during the '50s. During this time, a modernised iteration of jazz was dominating airwaves and was championed by a group called the Mods, who were characterised by their sharp tailored suits and, for women, angular shift dresses. Then came '90s grunge, spearheaded by the likes of Nirvana's Kurt Cobain and Pearl Jam. Encapsulated by the antithesis of the American dream and suburban life, this wave was signified by ripped denim, old T-shirts and plaid shirts. These cornerstones would go on to be at the forefront of a history-defining moment in fashion—inspiring Marc Jacobs' spring/summer 1993 show for American fashion brand Perry Ellis; a move so divisive that it resulted in Jacobs being fired from his role.

Today, the tango between the two portals has intensified. As the late fashion designer Virgil Abloh is fondly quoted as saying: "Fashion is one of the greatest vehicles to merge music, art, architecture, design, typography—it's a wide enough canvas, or a big enough sandbox, to touch all the different things that I'm into." Today, the influence of Y2K on some of the industry's biggest brands, almost a quarter of a century later, is undeniable. Apart from its obvious signifiers, from butterfly tops and chunky belts to colour-mania and defiant drapery, the trend also brings with it a homage to the icons of the new millennium such as Britney Spears, Sarah Jessica Parker and Gwen Stefani. With brands such as Blumarine, Diesel, Balenciaga and Loewe interpreting





“Fashion is one of the *greatest vehicles to merge* music, art, architecture, design, typography—it’s a wide enough canvas, or a big enough sandbox, to *touch* all the *different* things that *I’m into*.”

the era in their own ways, pop figureheads seemed to be the go-to reference points.

However, on the runways, the past year has witnessed a resurgence of the art form in a manner more nuanced than what we are accustomed to. Rather than focusing on eras or icons, the collections sought to evoke a feeling, akin to the experience one has when listening to a beloved song, feeling it resonate with every fibre of their being. The most pivotal example of this was Chanel’s 2023/2024 Métiers d’art collection, which was inspired by and presented in Manchester, England. While music-led collections have always been intrinsic to the brand, the basis of this line-up was rooted in creation. “For me, Manchester is the city of music,” shared creative director Virginie Viard in press notes. “It incites creation.” This brimming pool of sensitivity and vibrancy echoed through the pieces in an injection of colour. Suits, bags and shoes were sent down the runway in what the brand touted as a “poetry of emotions with the dash of the ‘60s”, in a host of pinks, oranges, greens, yellows, blues and reds. While jackets and wraparound skirts spoke to Viard’s classic vision, denim, leather knit staples and babydoll head turners painted a version of the true eccentric, cloaked in all the offbeat glory that Manchester’s underground music scene is known for. Completely turning things on its head was Pharrell Williams for Louis Vuitton Men’s. Williams, who is a stalwart of the entertainment industry, produced and was featured on a track called ‘Good People’ with American band Mumford & Sons which debuted at his Western-themed autumn/winter 2024 showing. Featuring a Native American choir, the move was an unprecedented one, bringing together two universes, and their equally all-encompassing and moving powers effortlessly.

As we flip the pages of this issue, starting with a cover of Charli XCX lensed by Nick Knight—who has crafted the music videos of Lady Gaga, Kanye West and Björk—the fusion only further solidifies. At the axis of fashion and music is the one thing that brings it altogether: the innate desire to feel. ●



Short CUT

This spring/summer 2024, it's all about keeping it sexy and short—just take cues from Gucci, Marni and Acne Studios. Amp up sensuality in the form of standout mini dresses with playful details such as fluted hems and voluminous silhouettes.

Photography STEFAN KHOO
Styling JASMINE ASHVINKUMAR

Tory Burch dress,
price upon request



1. Jacquemus dress, €1,290 **2.** Welldone dress, US\$1,996 **3.** Marni dress, US\$2,600 from Bergdorf Goodman **4.** Gucci **5.** Tom Ford **6.** Acne Studios **7.** Courrèges dress, US\$1,960 from Moda Operandi **8.** Miu Miu dress, \$5,200 **9.** Louis Vuitton dress, \$11,900

InVOGUE *Trends*



1. JW Anderson dress, \$1,740 from Farfetch **2.** Versace dress, US\$2,650 **3.** Hermès **4.** Alexander McQueen jacket, \$8,370
5. Courrèges pants, €1,490 **6.** Stella McCartney jeans, \$6,730 **7.** Peter Do

Loewe top, price upon request; Valentino jeans, \$27,800; Ferragamo heels, price upon request



Take A HINT

With summer upon us, explore myriad ways to keep cool and reveal skin. *Vogue* Singapore's tip? Opt for refinement with strategically placed cutouts. The peek-a-boo effect offers an alternative to slinkier silhouettes—and with many iterations gracing the runways, the choices are endless.

New SCHOOL

Shorts are a must-have for an equal parts stylish and practical wardrobe. Switch things up from the popular micro-length and try knee-grazing silhouettes, ruffled hemlines and snakeskin prints for size.




Valentino top, \$3,280;
Loewe shorts, \$2,400;
Saint Laurent by
Anthony Vaccarello
cap, price upon request;
Prada shoes, \$1,850;
tights, stylist's own



1. Chanel 2. The Row 3. JW Anderson 4. Valentino 5. JW Anderson shorts, US\$1,050 from Moda Operandi
 6. Max Mara shorts, price upon request 7. Miu Miu shorts, \$2,370 8. Dries Van Noten shorts, US\$325 9. Area shorts, US\$1,200
 10. Prada shorts, \$2,100 11. Stella McCartney shorts, price upon request 12. Coperni shorts, US\$1,190



1. Christopher Esber top, US\$700 **2.** Burberry dress, \$12,500 from Farfetch **3.** Prada dress, \$25,500 **4.** Jil Sander dress, US\$11,990 from Moda Operandi **5.** Prada **6.** Bottega Veneta bag, \$24,100 **7.** Alexander McQueen **8.** Dries Van Noten heels, \$1,212 from Farfetch **9.** Rabanne



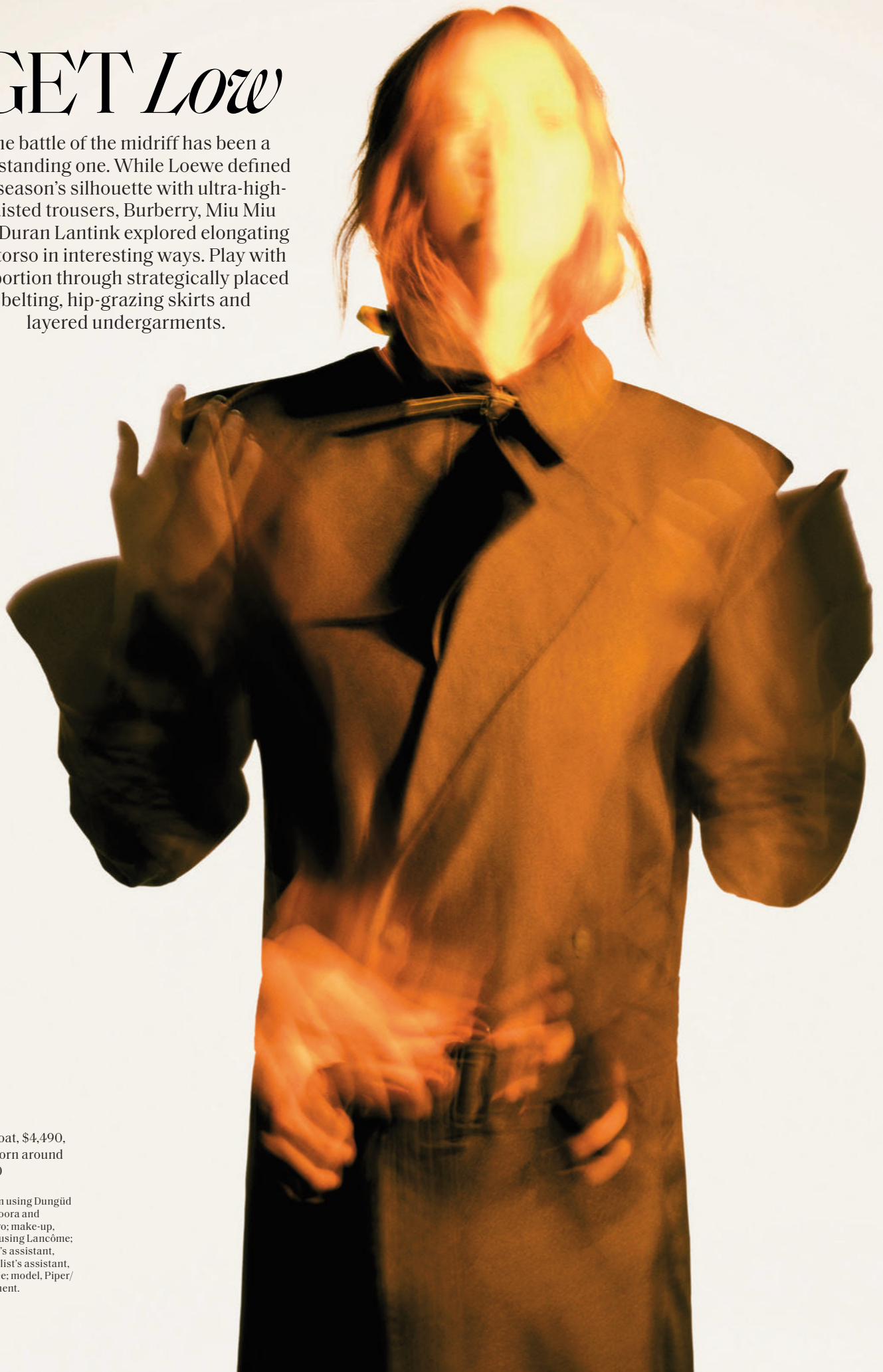
Prada jacket, \$4,400,
skirt, \$7,700, shorts,
\$1,930, and belt, \$955

FRINGE *Benefit*

Who can forget the fringed Prada skirts that made their way down Milan's runway? A standout piece of the season, this trend was also seen at McQueen and Rabanne. Incorporate the detail in striking and subtle ways, from frilled heels to tasseled dresses.

GET *Loze*

The battle of the midriff has been a longstanding one. While Loewe defined the season's silhouette with ultra-high-waisted trousers, Burberry, Miu Miu and Duran Lantink explored elongating the torso in interesting ways. Play with proportion through strategically placed belting, hip-grazing skirts and layered undergarments.



Burberry coat, \$4,490,
and belt (worn around
neck), \$820

Hair, Yuhi Kim using Dungüid
from Woorailoora and
Dyson Hair Pro; make-up,
Clarence Lee using Lancôme;
photographer's assistant,
Chong Ng; stylist's assistant,
Elizabeth Chee; model, Piper/
Ave Management.



1. Acne Studios 2. JW Anderson coat, \$1,950 3. Aya Muse dress, US\$890 from Moda Operandi 4. Proenza Schouler dress, \$7,135
5. Duran Lantink 6. Alexander McQueen 7. KNWLS pants, \$729 from Mytheresa 8. Courrèges pants, €5,550 9. Miu Miu

Subversive CLASSICS



During an intimate preview in Seoul this January, *Vogue* Singapore's editor-in-chief, Desmond Lim, speaks to fashion designer **Rok Hwang** about his upcoming collaboration with **H&M**.

Words NICHOLAS SEE Additional reporting DESMOND LIM

Chicness and subversiveness often find themselves at conflicting ends of the fashion spectrum. It takes a designer with focus and clarity to balance both—and through that, the desirability of the garment flourishes. South Korea-born, Texas-raised fashion designer Rok Hwang is one such creative.

Hwang grew up in Austin, but moved to London in 2004 to attend Central Saint Martins, where he earned a BA in menswear and an MA in womenswear. During this time, he trained under the late Professor Louise Wilson, who had mentored fashion greats such as Alexander McQueen, Jonathan Saunders and Christopher Kane. Hwang was a star student, winning the first prize for Central Saint Martins' graduate collections in 2009.

Following his time at Central Saint Martins, Hwang joined Céline in Paris, where he worked under Phoebe Philo as a ready-to-wear designer for her landmark debut collection, before embarking on freelance work at Chloé and Louis Vuitton. Being part of Philo's team created a solid foundation for his work. Hwang adopted the same modern sensibility that Philo is known for, albeit with an injection of play. This design ethos became the unique perspective of his label, Rokh, which he established in 2016.

His pieces are an invitation to touch, feel and explore. From buttons that can be attached in various ways to reversible items, Hwang's twist on otherwise serious silhouettes sets him apart from other designers. Instead of relying on glitzy prints and voluminous silhouettes, he focuses on the intimate relationship between the wearer and the garment. Rokh's designs exhibit refinement; while they possess quirkiness, there is also a sense of control.

It seems that everyone should own a piece of Rokh and H&M is making it a reality by launching a collaborative capsule on 18 April. Spanning menswear, womenswear and accessories, the collection features some of Rokh's signatures, from double-layer trench coats to detachable-hem dresses.

Here, editor-in-chief Desmond Lim speaks to Hwang about his design ethos, his collaboration with H&M and what he would like to see more of in the sartorial space in 2024.

How would you describe yourself in two words?

Radically classic. I like to play in a way where I follow the rules but at the same time break them. I think that translates to the core of what Rokh is as well.

How did growing up in Austin influence your perspective on design?

At that time, Austin was still quite green in terms of its arts scene; it was more of a suburban area with beautiful nature. It never crossed my mind that I would be involved in design or fashion. When I first experienced arts and culture away from home, it was a big shock. I absorbed everything like a sponge and fell in love with music, fashion and visual arts. This feeling intensified when I first stepped foot in London and I believe it was crucial for my growth as a designer.

Having worked at houses like Céline, Chloé and Louis Vuitton, what's the most valuable experience you've gained as a designer?

That everybody who worked in the industry, especially in the luxury sector, was focused on delivering a visually artistic direction while ensuring clarity and coherence. Most of it is driven by our passion.



THIS PAGE
South Korea-born, Texas-raised Rok Hwang started his label Rokh in 2016 with a clear focus on subverting classics while keeping them wearable.

FACING PAGE
Rokh's collaborative capsule with H&M puts modularity and play at its crux.

How did you feel about joining esteemed designers like Margiela and Lanvin for the H&M and Rokh collaboration?

I felt deeply honoured to be a part of it. Additionally, I was grateful and thrilled to have the opportunity to share my core DNA with a wider global audience.

Describe how your aesthetic influences the newness and desirability of this collection.

We focused on constructing a timeless and beautiful wardrobe. Simultaneously, however, you will find a playful way of designing. For example, you will find two layers of trench coats amalgamated together and also buttons in the 'wrong' places on an otherwise clean silhouette. It becomes a detail that's intimate to the wearer. You can take off one sleeve and button it up however you like. Suddenly, that becomes a new style that is unique to you. That element is key to my designs, especially for this collection.

What is a must-have from the collection?

We put in a lot of our time and dedication to make sure that the trench coat reflects our iconic brand DNA. If you want a true Rokh garment, that's the piece you need to get.

What are your hopes for style and fashion this year?

I dream about the energy from the '90s and early noughties, when designers focused on their unique languages and building their characteristics. I want to see more of each designer's independent voice in their designs. That's what I hope to embody as well. ●



True D-SIRE

Referencing the iconic shape and silhouette of the Lady Dior, the new **D-Sire** bag reimagines traditional house codes and style.

Words BRYAN HO

THIS PAGE: IMAGE COURTESY OF ANDREA GENETTEMPO;
FACING PAGE: IMAGE COURTESY OF SASHA MARRO

A successor to the Lady Dior bag, the D-Sire bag boasts a refreshed silhouette and updated materials.





Each bag is constructed from scratch by master artisans, an ode to the *maison's* craftsmanship.

There is no occasion *unfit* for the *D-Sire bag*, a *timeless investment* that will hold its own for generations to come.

When one thinks of the realm of designer handbags, the house of Dior certainly springs to mind. Since its inception nearly a century ago by founder Christian Dior, the French house has long been at the forefront of luxury fashion, having amassed an impressive portfolio of It bags. These bags symbolise more than mere status as they inject a sense of sophistication and appreciation for fine leather goods.

The spring/summer 2024 season saw creative director Maria Grazia Chiuri redefine the Dior woman through a curation of reimagined house classics that injected vibrancy into timeless wardrobe staples. Outerwear was given a modern update, with its structured silhouette exaggerated further by svelte waistlines to provide the wearer with a trigonal shape. Also imbued through the collection were celestial imagery and embroidery on many of the dresses, their softness juxtaposed by chunky and utilitarian combat boots. In typical Chiuri fashion, the topic of femininity and female empowerment was omnipresent, with the set design for the show being a bold graphic installation that saw feminist slogans such as 'Your body is poetic/Your body is political' plastered across the screens.

On the accessories front, it seems the idea of rejuvenation has trickled over to the bags. This season saw the return of many favourites, albeit offered in new materials and textures. The emblematic *Toujours* bags were offered in a shimmery quilted

finish, while the spirited *Book Tote* saw a recurring floral motif that was also noticeable on several of the pleated skirts.

There were also new additions to the family, led by the *Lady D-Sire* bag. Deemed the updated and contemporary version of the iconic *Lady Dior*, its squarish shape and macro *Cannage* detailing are reminiscent of its predecessor. Also designed as a top handle, the compact nature of the body makes it easy to carry.

Offered in two stunning variations—crinkled calfskin or grained *Taurillon* leather—it is supple to the touch, its sleek and elegant silhouette adding a level of refinement to any ensemble. Each component of the *D-Sire* is constructed from scratch, meticulously hand-stitched and put together by master artisans at the atelier. Playful block letter charms, similar to those seen on the *Lady Dior*, spell the name of the house in shimmering gold. And finally, the distinguishing factor of the *D-Sire* bag is perhaps in its wearability, boasting foldable handles and an additional adjustable shoulder strap providing the wearer with a myriad ways to carry it.

The bag is available in black, dark brandy and powder beige, and in four different sizes. For those looking at an elegant date night accessory, the smallest size is portable while still being able to house all of one's essentials. The large iteration, meanwhile, is perfect for seamlessly transitioning from day to night. There is no occasion unfit for the *D-Sire* bag, a timeless investment that will continue to serve its purpose and hold its own for generations to come. ●



Buckle UP

For spring/summer 2024, **Givenchy's** cool-meets-sophisticated bag line gets a sparkling update with the Voyou Chain.

Words MAYA MENON

Introduced on the spring/summer 2023 runways at Jardin des Plantes, the updated Voyou bag embodies class and edge.



Spring/summer 2024 marked a season of newness, especially in the bag department. In September last year, Givenchy's creative director Matthew M Williams's final show for the French luxury fashion house, hosted at L'École Militaire, was a sensual display of eveningwear that paid homage to its 72-year history. With a set designed by structural engineer and architect Gabriel Calatrava, the stage was prepped for a contrastingly classical collection. The line-up featured quintessential Givenchy cornerstones, notably referencing its most enduring muse: Audrey Hepburn. Amid the little black dresses, tailored coats and injections of satin were accessories that remained true to Williams's origins. Beyond that, it painted a picture of some of the house's most iconic bags, such as the Antigua and Pandora.

The star of the show, however? Givenchy's new Voyou bag. Introduced on the spring/summer 2023 runways at Jardin des Plantes, the Voyou has effortlessly embodied the house's crossover of contemporary cool. The name, which is French for 'bad boy', is a melding of French and American codes, infusing Hubert de Givenchy's sensibilities with an edge that many have come to love Williams for. Created with an everyday-meets-biker sensibility in mind, the Voyou, which is in essence a hobo bag, has an eye-

catching V shape that is constructed from a soft and malleable grained calfskin. Channelling what Givenchy dubs Left Bank sophistication, the bag boasts some key features: turned edges, a natural secure fold and a zippered compartment for smaller essentials. An etched buckle, sliders and a signature D-ring give it a finish that is equal parts nonchalant as it is dressy.

Though its hobo style is charming, the Voyou is adaptable depending on aesthetic and mood. For one, its adjustable and embossed strap allows it to be transformed into a hand-carry or crossbody bag. It doesn't end there, however. For spring/summer 2024, the Voyou sees an update in the form of the Voyou Chain. Brought to life as an elevated everyday essential, the bag boasts a few differences. For one, its gradient-link chain strap, made from jewel-like metal links that go up in size, makes an elegant accent. Complete with a semi-structured and slightly slimmer make, the bag is easy to wear and fuss-free. It also has V-line corner straps that allow it to be adjusted while carried. Unlike its predecessor, the updated Voyou Chain only comes in a medium size, but is accented by an assortment of finishes, from tumble leather and soft suede to laminated leather and denim. If you're in the market for a bag that is equal parts a conversation starter as it will be an enduring (yet playful) wardrobe classic, the Givenchy Voyou Chain might be one to consider. ●

InVOGUE *Style*



All clothing and
accessories Chanel



Moving PACES

The realms of art and fashion have danced in unison for ages, intertwining as each inspires the other. Here, Hollywood luminary **Tilda Swinton** and director **Apichatpong Weerasethakul** draw from each other's perspectives to captivate us with a cinematic panorama of **Chanel**.

Photography HARIT SRIKHAO Styling JERRY STAFFORD



RING OF FIRE

Tautened by a scooped waist, soft pink stripes swirl around its wearer with a ruffled collared cape adding a touch of modesty.



IMPOSSIBLE IMMUNITY
A sophisticated pairing
of a plaid jacket and
trousers features a waist-
cinching detail, adding a
special touch.



REFLECTING SOULS

Dramatic and debonair, this jacket's bold shoulders and high neckline is softened by its silk-printed motifs and crystals.



SPIRITED AWAY

Adventure and luxury unite as belt hoops take the place of a necklace on a denim-detailed shirt. Paired effortlessly with jeans, it's the perfect ensemble.



CHERUB COMETS
Hues of blue dust this
dress, its carefree
silhouette paired with
velvet slippers.

Make-up, Alongkorn
Soontornpot; hair,
Agkarachai Deedphin; hair
colourist, Josh Wood.





Love, Bonito's revamp amplifies its Ready-to-live ethos, which focuses on designing pieces for real women and their everyday lives.

Get READY-TO-LIVE

Love, Bonito celebrates the transformative journey of womanhood with five brand ambassadors, exciting design launches and more.

Words MAYA MENON

If you're a fashion aficionado, chances are you have heard of the Singaporean brand, Love, Bonito. Established in 2010, it has centred its ethos around championing Asian women with of-the-moment designs, combining form and function with exceptional ease. Today, it is the largest direct-to-consumer womenswear brand in Southeast Asia. It's no wonder then that it has undergone a revamp to celebrate and encapsulate a revolutionary journey, from its dedication to becoming a port-of-call for Asian women to abolishing outdated archetypes.

Launching this change are a few pivotal transformations. Fans can expect a heart-shaped 'LB' logo and an updated colour palette, from its recognisable peach hue to a rich brown, vibrant pink and bold red. With this, comes the coining of the term 'ready-to-live', a play on 'ready-to-wear', which embodies Love, Bonito's essence of designing pieces for real women.

Comprising flattering designs, complementary tones and failproof fits, the brand has pulled from its own expertise to come up with three anchor lines: Signatures (contemporary and accessible looks that span feminine silhouettes to power suiting), Staples (tried-and-tested and reliable wardrobe must-haves) and capsule collections. The most recent launch as at March

was Signatures, which features 30 designs as well as functional elements incorporated for work, weekends and beyond. The designs also amplify ready-to-live features such as bloat-friendly, crease-ease, padded busts and instant length.

Fronting this launch are five women who have purposeful stories of their own that amplify Love, Bonito's core message of authenticity, strength and versatility. For Korean-American actress and entrepreneur Arden Cho, it involves advocating for an equitable entertainment industry for Asian-American women. For Malaysian singer-songwriter and artist Yuna, it means prioritising authenticity and remaining true to oneself. For Singaporean-American mother-daughter content creator duo Gym Tan and Mya Rose Miller, it's about promoting the idea that style, grace and beauty are not bound by age. And for American author Chanel Miller, it's about unwavering strength no matter the circumstance.

Spotlighting key pieces such as the Ling belted tailored waistcoat, Arden tweed jacket, Rachel ruched-ready blazer, Ivy satin button-down shirt, Simone pleated padded twist back jumpsuit and Dez pleated boat neck crop top, expect a line-up that will cater to just about every occasion. As Rachel Lim, co-founder of Love, Bonito, puts it: "This milestone represents a heartfelt tribute to our Asian women community. Through our rebrand, we honour our rich Asian heritage and challenge stereotypes surrounding Asian women. This evolution extends to our apparel design, where we prioritise not only perfecting the Asian fit but also ensuring that each piece is meticulously crafted for functionality, confidence and versatility. From school drop-offs to the boardroom and date nights, our designs empower women to embrace every aspect of their lives with style and grace." ●

The FLIP SIDE

Introducing the **Fendi Flip**: a sleek-meets-versatile clutch that made its debut on Milan's spring/summer 2024 runways.

Words MAYA MENON



The latest addition to Fendi's bag rotation, the Fendi Flip is a colour-blocked clutch that boasts a variety of colourways and styling options.

IMAGE COURTESY OF FENDI

Debates about bag styles may continue season after season, but a timeless accessory is one that delivers all its contradictions. Imagined by creative director Kim Jones, Fendi's spring/summer 2024 show was indicative of all that the Italian luxury fashion house has become beloved for. Boasting an out-of-this-world set, life-sized accessory icons loomed over attendees in brilliant white, and their real-life counterparts such as the First, Peekaboo, Baguette and Origami bags made their way down the runway in a careful curation of colour-blocked neutrals and sparkling accents.

Clothes-wise, the models were decked out in knitwear separates with bold cutouts, silk dresses as well as sumptuous leather pieces in a colour-blocked palette of browns, oranges, blues and greys. Effortlessly introduced as part of the mix was the Fendi Flip, an equally colour-blocked clutch that made its debut—styled in 12 different ways—at the show on Via Solari 35 in Milan. With an iconic 'F' embossed logo, which doubles up as a flap that reveals different colours on each side, the Fendi Flip combines house hallmarks with contemporary versatility. As for the season's hottest colour combinations? A delectable brown, fiery red and dusty blue, coupled with an alternative selection of yellow, beige and light blue.

The bag offers its versatility in both its make and array of sizes. For one, it is available in three different iterations: a large and medium carry-all as well as a nano version. While the first two can be worn over the shoulder or under the arm as a clutch, the nano offers the option to be worn as a cross-body chain, or better yet, a bag charm.

The sizes aren't limiting, though. Fashioned out of soft, supple leather, the Fendi Flip, though compact at first glance, unveils a surprisingly roomy interior. Add this brand new Fendi family favourite to your collection for a seamless option that will take you from day to night with ease. ●

Love LETTER

H&M's spring 2024 collection celebrates contemporary femininity and romance through a rebirth of wardrobe treasures.

Words BRYAN HO

In today's fashion landscape, few brands have reached the level of global success that Swedish giant Hennes & Mauritz—better known as H&M—has achieved. Founded in 1947, the brand has quickly emerged as a household name with its commitment to versatile quality clothing that embraces diversity and inclusivity.

For its spring 2024 collection, H&M has reinvented the wheel through a refreshed update of traditional wardrobe staples. Shares its head of design and concept Eliana Masgalos on the genesis of the collection: “This season, we were really inspired by the idea of rebirth, like the first flowers blooming.” And bloom it did, with sculptural blouses, dresses and skirts filled with vigour, their volume and shape brought to life through pintucks and flounces. As for the tailoring, traditional shirting and suiting were reconstructed, their silhouettes relaxed and softened while maintaining clean lines. Workwear-inspired pieces in the form of bomber jackets and denim co-ords took on retro shapes and designs, with an evident nod to power dressing from the '90s.

On the accessories front, svelte slingback kitten heels and ballerina flats provided a much-needed contrast in silhouette, juxtaposing the boxier shapes of many of the garments. Chunky earrings and necklaces were offered in brushed silver, the perfect finishing touches to complete any outfit. The colour palette was muted and minimal; silver, white, ecru and pastel blues ideal for

“This season, we were really *inspired* by the idea of *rebirth*, like the first flowers *blooming*.”

the scorching summer. There was also an emphasis on intricate detailing through embellishments and cutouts, an ode to the brand's continued pursuit of championing craftsmanship.

The menswear followed a similar playbook, experimenting with common themes of minimalism and utility. A chore jacket in warm tan boasts dual chest pockets for functionality, while structured overshirts lend an edge of formality to otherwise casual ensembles. Textures in the form of delicate fabrics and embroidery found their place within the collection too, providing a modern twist on these sartorial classics.

With an ever-expanding network of stores and a robust online presence, H&M continues to elevate its status within the market. An industry trailblazer, this spring 2024 collection will help to solidify its status as one of the biggest labels in the world. ●



Boasting relaxed outerwear, voluminous tops and textural details, H&M's spring 2024 collection looks to modernise everyday staples.



Gucci's new collection looked to revamp the *maison's* long-standing house codes, injecting a subdued freshness that hinted at '90s minimalism.

Looking AHEAD

The new **Gucci Ancora** campaign celebrates the individuality, modernity and timeless allure of the spring/summer 2024 collection.

Words BRYAN HO

Ahead of the debut collection by newly appointed creative director Sabato De Sarno at the house of Gucci, there was fervent anticipation—and excitement—to say the least. Perhaps the most anticipated show of the spring/summer 2024 season, this collection would officially mark the end of Alessandro Michele’s tenure, hereby ushering in a new chapter for the house.

De Sarno’s debut showing was one that melded sensuality and wearability seamlessly. Certainly pared back in comparison to Michele’s fantastical, maximalist designs, the collection looked back at the house’s archives, giving several classics a refreshed update for the modern day. Svelte wool coats with peaked lapels, A-line skirts with an exaggerated slit and slinky tops with plunging necklines all provided a sharpness that was clean yet classic. The drama and pizzazz one expects from Gucci makes its appearance in understated ways, from the intricate embroidery to sparkling embellishment on several jacket collars and pockets.

The accessories this season followed suit, subdued in shape and muted in colour. Slingback pumps boasted the Gucci logo on the heel strap, gracing the feet of many models, while the iconic horsebit loafers were offered in croc-embossed platform iterations that were set to be a design staple of De Sarno’s for seasons to come. As for the bags, the Jackie shoulder bag saw an array of new shades, topped by a 900-crystal embellished option that proved to be the statement of the evening.

Following this collection came the unveiling of the Gucci Ancora campaign, one that aimed to blur the lines of personal expression and spirit through the timeless designs. Lensed by British fashion photographer David Sims, it painted a picture of an entourage of strong and individualistic women, empowered through a wardrobe both opulent and elegant. The five models gracing the campaign—Ana Ross, Fadia Ghaab, Jiahui Zhang, Nyajuok Gatdet and Violet Hume—are draped in statement pieces from the collection, each individualistic in their differences but cohesive in energy and attitude.

Even in a collection that was seemingly deemed commercial and ‘safe’, De Sarno’s vision was crystal clear: to wipe the slate clean and reinvent the wheels at Gucci, one free of irreverent glamour and provocation. The result was a no-frills approach that paid homage to the history of Gucci, filled with unparalleled craft and technique while charting a new course for the future. ●



A sharp blazer and a boxy bag make for an interesting play on structure and shapes.

Romantic
GETAWAY

As part of its spring/summer 2024 show on the historical Avenue des Champs-Élysées, **Louis Vuitton** explored the many facets of travel.

Words BRYAN HO

Nicolas Ghesquière is a maestro when it comes to the unconventional. Throughout his tenure as creative director at Louis Vuitton, the trailblazing designer has shown in some of the most interesting (and fantastical) venues around the world, from the Niterói Art Museum in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, in 2016 to the terraced gardens of Isola Bella in Italy last year.

The spring/summer 2024 collection saw no exception to this, with the show being set on the storied streets of Champs-Élysées. Known to be one of the world's most famous commercial streets, the avenue brims with life and exuberance, an energy befitting the pre-show anticipation. Greeting the show attendees was a 19th-century brick building that used to house international visitors who came for the momentous world fairs, its imposing architecture standing the test of time. As with previous seasons, there was a star-studded guest list filled with notable A-listers and Hollywood's young stars, such as Zendaya, Hyein and Cate Blanchett.

Inside, the sprawling all-orange interior of the venue was a striking visual, one reminiscent of a hot-air balloon. Designed by renowned American production designer James Chinlund, the set was perhaps a nod to the French luxury fashion house's long affinity with voyage and travel—given Louis Vuitton's history as a brand that started out making luxury trunks and suitcases for the wealthiest.

As for the garments, their stripes and prints were whimsical and nostalgic, seemingly filled with references to Ghesquière's greatest hits through the years. Mobility and function has always been a point of contention for the French designer, exhibited this time around through a seamless balance of flowy, summer separates as well as durable leather and PVC outerwear. Draping and pleating along the collars and sleeves were present, and ostentatious belts in supersized proportions that slung low on models' hips proved to be the statement of the evening.

The beauty, however, was in the craftsmanship and fabrication of the pieces. The long flowing skirts that were made from layers of mousseline and charmeuse, the corseted tops made at Louis Vuitton's bespoke atelier, and the fully beaded jumpsuit reminiscent of a slip dress. The collection closed with an array of jackets that at first glance looked to be constructed from a tweed *boucle*, but were actually laser-cut and refined to produce the ruffled texture, proving that the devil was in the details.

Looking at the accessories, it seems there was common consensus on the theme of going back in time. Clutches in the shape of traditional Polaroid cameras played to one's childhood memories, along with retro-futuristic sunglasses that could pass off as reimagined aviator goggles in the '90s. This season reinforced Ghesquière's vision of what the Louis Vuitton woman was—a strong and confident individual who possesses a certain allure, one that is effortless yet elegant. ●



Pair a flowy shirt dress with a pencil skirt for an outing in high-low dressing.

THIS PAGE

For a fashion-forward ensemble, opt for a statement top and voluminous bottom.

FACING PAGE

Switch things up by playing around with how you wear and layer monochromatic pieces.









THIS PAGE
Co-ord sets that can
be dressed up or down
make a versatile outfit
for any occasion.

FACING PAGE
Mix clashing stripes
and prints for a unique
textural affair.

The EDIT

Channel your inner pop star with pieces from the hottest young Asian designers to know right now.

Edit NICHOLAS SEE

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18.

1. *Didu* dress, £905 2. *Yueqi Qi* flats, US\$410 3. *Pabe Pabe* bag, \$840 4. *I Wanna Bangkok* heels, US\$139 5. *Ssdslsus* skirt, US\$357 from Apoc Store 6. *Rokh* blazer, \$2,498 from Farfetch 7. *Grace Ling* skirt, \$1,759 8. *Lalume* pants, \$210 9. *Ojos* boots, US\$332 10. *Miao Atelier* choker, \$244 11. *Susan Fang* top, \$719 from Mytheresa 12. *Dauphinette* earring, \$110 13. *Ponder.er* dress, \$600 from Yours 14. *Bad Binch Tongtong* sweater, US\$355 15. *Motoguo* hoodie, US\$905 16. *Sho Konishi* bag, US\$600 17. *Chet Lo* skirt, £445 18. *Windowsen* cap, US\$766

Magic POTIONS

Update your fragrance wardrobe with these scents of the summer.

Words ALLI SIM

1. Hermès Hermessence Oud Alezan

\$522 for 100ml eau de parfum

Years ago, in a bid to overcome her fear of horses, Hermès perfumer Christine Nagel visited the stables at the Saut Hermès show-jumping event. The tender encounter gave rise to Oud Alezan, the sensorial marriage of animalic oud with the emotion of rose. Here, the primal majesty of oud is perfectly complemented by rose oxide notes, making it a perfect gender neutral scent statement.

2. Amaffi Maracoca For Women

\$9,700 for 90ml eau de parfum

Created by master perfumer Bertrand Duchaufour, Maracoca For Women captivates with a sensual white flower accord (think jasmine, sweet white gardenia, intoxicating frangipani) while mouthwatering notes of creamy tonka beans, sharp passionfruit and yuzu add lightness to the scent. "The luminosity and effervescence of the perfume is achieved through a delicate balance of exotic fruit notes, with mango and neroli oil melding seamlessly together to create an enticing olfactory symphony," shares Duchaufour.

3. Chloé Eau de Parfum Lumineuse

\$205 for 50ml eau de parfum

The classic Chloé rose, reinterpreted. "The idea was to create a wonderfully warm, delicate rose, and to bring out a more sensual facet of Chloé femininity without compromising on elegance," muses perfumer Ane Ayo. The result? A solar rose composition with velvety sambac jasmine, a vanilla heart and ambery base notes rounding off this addictive new scent.

4. Analisa The Perfumers' Album La Promesse

\$219 for 100ml eau de parfum

French label Analisa's debut in Asia couldn't be any more poetic than with its collection of symphonies or scent stories composed by all-star perfume legends. La Promesse, created by nose Sonia Constant, is an intimate glimpse into a childhood filled with poetry inspired by fragrance. It opens with a juicy grapefruit top note and teases with green notes of eucalyptus, fresh pine and fir balsam with roasted vetiver and leathery notes anchoring the base, leaving a sensual second skin appeal.

5. Kenzo Nuage Ceriser

\$75 for 75ml eau de parfum

Nuage Ceriser is the ninth addition to Kenzo's Memori collection, which pays tribute to founder Kenzo Takada's recollections of the family's tea house. Capturing the otherworldly beauty of cherry blossoms, the fragrance crafted by Suzy Le Halley evokes springtime in bloom with citrus notes and a woody floral signature. ●





1. *Huda Beauty* Creamy Obsessions Eyeshadow Palette in No.3, US\$32 from Huda Beauty
2. *Anastasia Beverly Hills* Norvina Pro Pigment Vol 6 in B1, \$120 from Sephora
3. *Dasique* Eyeshadow Palette 20 Blueberry Sorbet in Macaron Gelato, \$42 from KSisters
4. *Clio* Pro Eye Palette 02 Rose Connect in Rose Affair, \$49.90 from Watsons
5. *Anastasia Beverly Hills* Norvina Pro Pigment Vol 6 in C4, \$120 from Sephora
6. *Dasique* Eyeshadow Palette 20 Blueberry Sorbet in Crunchy Pop, \$42 from KSisters
7. *Anastasia Beverly Hills* Norvina Pro Pigment Vol 6 in C2, \$120 from Sephora

Electric FEEL

Make no mistake—this is one colour palette that packs a punch. Immerse your lids in washes of colour that pay homage to the '80s, from high-octane blues to candy pink.

Photography and styling STUDIO OOOZE
Words EMILY HENG

IN THE KNOW:
Your Beauty Insider Report



Get ahead of the curve. From all-in-one face palettes to lymphatic drainage massages, here's the scoop on what the biggest beauty movers and shakers consider integral to their regimen this year.

Words EMILY HENG

To keep pace with the beauty realm is to be attuned to its ever-evolving lexicon. In 2023, make-up techniques were rebranded as our favourite foods, from strawberry girl blush to glazed donut skin. Then there was the previous year, when individuals were fixated on wellness practices that included mewing and skin-slugging. And while it's fair to assume that such terms are comprehensible to veterans within the industry,

the same can hardly be said for individuals who have just entered the fray—or are perhaps still figuring out how to optimise their #BeautyTok algorithm to its fullest potential. Should you be one of the latter, *Vogue* Singapore is here to help. How so? By going straight to the source and speaking to the most prolific beauty tastemakers; the ones responsible for transforming micro-trends into full-blown movements as well as amplifying new skincare and make-up practices.



Haku

Cosplayer And Make-Up Artist

“An underrated beauty secret that I believe more people should know about is my two-step lip application. It’s one of the initial steps in my make-up routine. I apply a lip tint that serves as a subtle base. While I complete the rest of my make-up, I allow the tint to set. As a final step, I wipe it off before applying another lipstick. This ensures that even if I eat or drink throughout the day, there remains a wash of colour on my lips.

“The initial lip tint prevents my lips from appearing completely bare when I am out for a whole day or eating. It’s a simple yet effective technique that maintains a polished and vibrant lip look, proving to be a game changer in my beauty routine.”

Taylor Wang

TikTok Star

“A grey-toned contouring shade is so underrated, especially for individuals with fair skin tones. I’ve done a bit of colour theory make-up research based on painting and drawing techniques, and grey emerged as the ideal shade for creating the shadows that are needed in contouring. Many Western brands base their contouring products on bronzy tones that contain too much orange and warmth. This isn’t the most suitable colour for fair skin tones. If you have fair skin, consider using a light-medium taupe or grey shade for your contouring. You can thank me later.”

Mikan

Fashion Designer and YouTube Personality

“Not enough people use colour-correcting products. Before using my regular concealer, I apply a salmon-coloured concealer under my eyes to mask the dark circles, and I swear it instantly erases them with just a dab. You end up needing much less product overall, which helps prevent things such as separation and creasing, plus it’s so quick and easy.

“On days when I don’t feel like wearing much make-up, I dab on a little bit of salmon concealer on my dark circles and go on with my day. I use the *Integrate Melty Fit Concealer palette*, \$37, which I really like.”



Jen Atkin

Founder of Ouai

"I can't live without the *Salt & Stone Santal & Vetiver Natural Deodorant*, \$33, right now. The scent and packaging are so beautiful. Not only does it smell good, it looks great in my bathroom cabinet, too."

Jenny Park

Model

"I would consider these products from *Urban Decay* to be my make-up essentials: the *Hydromaniac Dewy Liquid Blush*, US\$22, and *All Nighter Setting Spray*, US\$36. They help me achieve the 'point blush' look that I adore. Skincare-wise, I'm all for the *Mediheal Madecassoside Blemish Pad*, \$25.17. And not forgetting the *Eco Styler Olive Oil Styling Gel*, \$7.50, of course—I use it when I do my Pucca-style ponytail and braids."

Julian Stoller

Celebrity Make-Up Artist

"I don't think enough people use the *MAC Cosmetics Pro Longwear Paint Pots*, \$49. They're really gorgeous. They have a pleasant cream texture, wear beautifully and last for ages. I usually define the eye with a deeper shade in the crease before applying powder eyeshadow."

Naz

Beauty Influencer

"I'm a big believer in mixing sunscreens, because I find that your complexion is always changing. I'm currently using several K-Beauty sunscreens interchangeably, but I've been reaching out a lot to *Goodal Calming Moisture Sun Cream*, \$20.93, just because it feels super lightweight."



Anda

Beauty Influencer

"It's crucial for everyone to know that your skin needs to rest. I'm a firm believer in the fact that you need to have skincare rest days. Don't apply anything to your skin on days where you can help it—just opt for a thin layer of your favourite soothing sleeping mask. My favourite is the *Fresh Beauty Lotus Youth Preserve Rescue Mask Seaweed Radiance Facial*, \$45, which makes my skin look super soft and luminous the next day."

Daniel Chan

Beauty Influencer

"A good, intensely hydrating sheet mask is the best make-up primer you can get. My go-to is the *Kosé Cosmeport Clear Turn 8Eauty Sheet Mask*, \$8.50. It's great when you need your skin to look its best and firmly grab onto make-up beautifully."

Grape

TikTok Star

"The *Medicube Age-R Booster Pro*, \$650, is a life-changer. I only recently started using it but it helps to reduce facial bloating, especially in the morning, and makes my skin glow. It pairs great with lymphatic drainage massages, which I find are underrated. The *Laneige Lip Sleeping Mask*, \$15, is a must-have too. I've been using it for the past four years and have forgotten what it's like to have dry lips."

Zak Heath

TikTok Star

"I'm a huge advocate of the *Makeup Forever HD Skin All-In-One Face Palette*, \$137, because you can easily create a full face with its range of shades. The ease of every shade being in one portable palette makes doing my make-up less time consuming. Concealer? Done. Foundation? Done. Bronzer? Done."

Ammy Drammeh, Valentina Li and Cécile Paravina were It make-up artists in their own right. Now thanks to Chanel, they're the Cometes Collective.

FACING PAGE
Chanel's spring 2024 collection created by the Cometes Collective explores the power and singularity of colour.



Cosmic GIRLS

A star is born. Or in **Chanel's** case, three, as it harnesses the magic of a trio of directional make-up artists now known as the Cometes Collective.

Words ALLI SIM

Ammy Drammeh. Valentina Li. Cécile Paravina. To lovers of beauty and those in the know, these make-up artists need no introduction. Yet since joining the house of Chanel as the Cometes Collective, these creatives are poised for stellar levels of global fame.

Li, a Guangxi native, was informed by her agent while on a shoot one fateful day, and described the top secret news like “fireworks blooming” in her body, while Barcelona-born Drammeh recounts the call from Chanel as an “incredible, pinch me moment”. As the surreal experience of their collaboration with the storied French house has subsided, the work itself has come to the fore. I sat down with the three luminaries to learn about their diverse perspectives on beauty, their vision for Chanel beauty and all the products they're creating under the umbrella of the Cometes Collective.

Describe your personal beauty style versus the considerations you have in mind when creating for the Cometes Collective.

Drammeh: They both go hand in hand. I like to create things I would use on my own and simultaneously, products that I would love to have in my kit so I could use them on other people. I keep things simple, so I like products that are versatile and that I can bring with me everywhere. Even if I go for something bold I need it to be quick and fuss-free. This translates into what's in my mind when I think about innovation.

Valentina, if money were no object and technology were no boundary, what dream product would you create?

Li: Make-up should be playful and experimental. A lot of the time, the colours you wear represent who you are and your emotion. I love the idea that you can create multiple looks or endless looks by using a few products. I would love to create smart, multi-use products; one that can do it all, one that can change colour and texture according to the person who wears it. For example, a lipstick that changes colour according to your body and your mood. Or an eyeshadow that changes in



texture and colour according to the environment that you are in. In fact, lots of plants and deep-sea creatures already have this function. We are moving forward to achieve that, I believe.

What were the most astonishing things that you learnt about Chanel Beauty when you joined?

Paravina: I was shocked to discover how long the entire process takes to release a make-up collection (more than two years!). This time is necessary to ensure that all tests are conducted and guarantee a high-quality product. I immediately understood that it is one of the reasons why we don't design based on temporary and ephemeral trends at Chanel Beauty, but rather based on things we believe are going to be relevant for a long time.

Cécile, how does a self-described free spirit like yourself honour your instincts while also respecting the codes of a house as storied as Chanel?

Paravina: The codes of Chanel resonate greatly with us. The way that Gabrielle Chanel would design was first and foremost an egotistical act. She created clothes and accessories for herself, for her own needs and the lifestyle she wanted to pursue because she couldn't find a wardrobe for herself in what was available at the time. This uncompromising way to design gave birth to the timeless pieces we know from Chanel. Ammy, Valentina and I appreciate that very much and try to emulate the ethos of Gabrielle Chanel and adapt it to today. In this way, I think that being 'free-spirited' isn't opposed to navigating Chanel's large repertoire of references.

Valentina, where did your obsession with the colour blue first stem from and how do you connect with it spiritually?

Li: My special passion with blueness is my statement to our planet. Mother Earth is covered with 71 percent of blue; when you look up, the sky is blue. Blue for me is essential. The first day I swam in the ocean, I felt at home being surrounded by water, with the blue. I feel calm and free and inspired and also grateful.

One of your missions is 'to make what is old new again'. How do you achieve this newness and innovation while creating in the context of Chanel?

Li: 'To make what is old new again' is really a question about how to play with classic elements and modern twists. We

honour heritage by drawing inspiration from iconic styles, then infusing them with contemporary innovation. We reinterpret classic beauty concepts to captivate modern audiences. Our approach blends tradition with cutting-edge vision to create make-up that is both timeless and trendsetting.

How can we have fun, and be bold and audacious, when creating beauty looks of our own?

Li: First, you need to have an open mind, the attitude of trying and experiencing colours that you've never tried before. Second, you need to know who you really are, what you really like. Pay less attention to the trends all over the internet, think more about what is really for you. Be careful not to fall in a trap and lose your own identity in the end. But don't worry if you haven't found yourself yet. Keep an open mind and play with the colours and make-up. Just enjoy and have fun. You will find your own relationship with colours and make-up eventually. I found my blue, so will you! ●

CURRENT BEAUTY OBSESSIONS



Paravina:
Rouge Duo Ultra Tenue. I love how incredibly longwearing it is. I wear it often and also love it for shoots when the model needs to have impeccable lips for hours. Right now, I'm obsessed with the shade Soft Candy. It's a soft pink that feels feminine and easy to wear, yet is a bit eccentric.



Drammeh:
My favourite skincare product at the moment is *Hydra Beauty Micro Crème.* I have oily, acne-prone skin and I definitely enjoy light textures more. I like that my skin feels super hydrated, like it drank a tall glass of water after I use it and it is perfect as a base for your make-up. I have been using *Les Beige* in BD61 for nearly four years now. This foundation has a radiant finish, buildable coverage and it lasts all day.

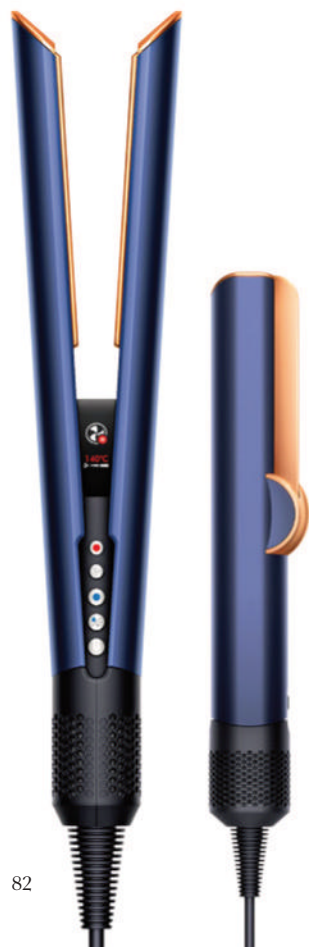
Beauty DESK

It's time to get your finger on the pulse. *Vogue* Singapore takes you through what's buzzy, bold and bursting with untapped potential in the beauty sphere this month.

Words EMILY HENG

Amp up the volume

It's a good time as any to attempt defying gravity—or for your tresses to, at least. This season, take a cue from the likes of Miley Cyrus, Lana Del Rey and Blake Lively with towering hairdos that exude glamour and daring in equal measure; a revamped take on classic styles such as the bouffant and the beehive. The spring/summer 2024 presentations also served as a wealth of inspiration, with Marc Jacobs sending models down the runway sporting fluffy, exaggerated strands that were whipped into cloud-like shapes, while Ronald van der Kamp opted for a tousled variation.



Mane attraction

It's safe to say that rapid advancements in technology have caused us to revise our stance on revered beauty commandments. The latest decree to undergo intense scrutiny? Never style drenched strands with heat tools—a notion that has now come under question with the launch of the *Dyson Airstraight*, \$799. This wet-to-dry straightening tool is devoid of conventional hot plates or heat technology that causes damage to strands. Instead, a focused airflow is used to do the job, where each high-pressure blade of air is forced downwards and into tresses to simultaneously dry and straighten. Equipped with two modes that allow users to utilise it on both wet and dry hair, it also harbours customisable airflow and cool shot settings to ensure seamless and versatile styling.



The hydration edit

Achieving your optimal skin state is only half the battle won, especially in light of what comes next: maintaining and protecting your newfound radiance. To aid in your pursuit, look to nourishing formulas designed to cocoon your countenance in a veil of hydration and antioxidants. Our ideal line-up: the *Guerlain Abeille Royale Double Clarify & Repair Essence*, \$185, a skin-soothing elixir that employs dynamic black bee repair technology to amplify your complexion's self-repair mechanisms; *Then I Met You Renewing Rich Beauty Cream*, \$97, a decadent concoction brimming with fortifying ingredients such as baobab and squalene; and the *Supergoop! Protec(tint) Daily SPF Tint SPF 50*, \$67, which shields your mien from oxidative stress while boosting moisture levels thanks to the inclusion of hyaluronic acid-infused clay.

Paint the town red

No frills or fuss, just a bold punch of colour. Make a formidable statement with carmine-painted talons that were a mainstay of the spring/summer 2024 presentations as seen at Viktor&Rolf, Moschino and Antonio Marras.



New haven

Heal your mind, body and soul with a visit to Singapore's latest home-grown beauty sanctuary, Neau. It boasts a comprehensive menu of customisable facial and body services—think cutting-edge microcurrent therapy and medical-grade radiofrequency tech—that is designed to leave guests feeling refreshed and invigorated. A standout: the *Neau Signature 14-Step Renewal Proionic Facial*, \$428, which amalgamates nourishing elixirs and devices to grant users a toned and radiant complexion. For a full top-to-toe pampering session, try the new *Suchehwa by Ted Korean Nourishing Head Spa*, \$350; a seven-step detoxifying and hydrating treatment suitable for anyone looking to improve their scalp health.

Far left: *Suchehwa by Ted*, 9 Penang Road, #02-01, Singapore 238459. Tel: 8831 9798
 Left: *Neau*, 313 Joo Chiat Road, Singapore 427564. Tel: 8070 7770

POLISH *Up*

Professional looks are getting a raise. Nothing tells the boardroom you mean business like a touch of individual flair, from bold manicures to a shimmery stare.

Photography NARANG CHOI Editor GAHYE SONG

GRAPHIC GAZE

After-hours beauty calls for drama. Forget your basic black eyeliner. Try this underrated yet graphic alternative—a swipe of silver across your waterline for dimension and impact.

Portrait Report ear cuff; Tom Wood jewel-embellished ear cuff





GLOSSY VS MATTE

We're talking skin. Opt for hydrating products such as Aesop's vitamin-rich Immaculate Facial Tonic to achieve that dewy freshness, or prime your face with Tom Ford Beauty's Traceless Soft Matte Primer for a crease-free matte finish.

Arsnova blazer



GET POLISHED

It's all in the details that invite us to break loose and embrace divergent interpretations of beauty. Paint a playground on your nails: clean and classic, experimental or daring—the choice is all yours.

Arsnova blazer, shirt and tie



AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Work that daily handcare routine by massaging therapeutic-grade oils from L'Occitane's Shea Nourishing Nail and Cuticle Oil on your cuticles, or moisturise them with Burt's Bees' Lemon Butter Cuticle Cream. The result? Stronger, healthier nails and longer-lasting manicures.

Arsnova blazer and shirt; Maison Margiela Derby shoes

WORDS: ELIZABETH CHEE; HAIR: HYEJIN LEE; MAKE-UP: SEONGSEOK OH; STYLIST: KUKSEON HYUN; MANICURE: MISUNG LEE; MODELS: YUGO AND YOUNG SOL OH.



The electric hues of Dior's Milly Carnivora jewellery are achieved through coloured lacquer and detailed with diamonds.



Colour VALUE

A kaleidoscopic garden blooms again at **Dior** with the reintroduction of a new jewellery collection.

Words GORDON NG

Flowers play an outsized role in the story of the house of Dior. The *couturier* was an avid gardener, as was his sister Catherine who was the inspiration behind the floral Miss Dior fragrance. The designer described his feminine couture silhouettes as ‘flower women’. He had a favourite flower, lily of the valley, which he embroidered on his creations. There are even books published on the subject of Dior’s affinity for flowers.

This month, the French house is tilling the soil of its mythos and introducing a new collection of floral fine jewellery. Do not, however, assume that these are delicate hothouse blooms. Named Milly Carnivora, these designs by Victoire de Castellane imagine a wilder, more unrestrained specimen. De Castellane may have taken inspiration from Dior’s elegant garden in Milly-la-Forêt, but her blooms are teetering with life in electric technicolour. A necklace, ring and earrings simulate this vision of nature, with petals and stems rendered in vivid coloured lacquer, mounted in yellow gold and decorated with diamonds. Shrinking violets these are certainly not. ●



Magic NUMBER

There's an old proverb that good things come in threes. **Cartier** would certainly agree as its enduring Trinity collection turns 100 this year. The Parisian jeweller took an entourage of guests on a whirlwind trip to mark the occasion, touring its historic temples of beauty in New York, London and Paris.

Words GORDON NG Additional reporting DESMOND LIM

Cartier Fifth Avenue Mansion

The third generation of Cartier, led by the brothers Louis, Jacques and Pierre, divided and conquered. Flagships were set up in New York City and London in the early 1900s to establish the jeweller beyond Paris. The Fifth Avenue mansion, replete with mid-century decor, has been the brand's home base in the Americas since 1912.

A legendary trade

Cartier acquired its gilded-age mansion home in New York through a monumental exchange. The American socialite Maisie Plant had fallen head over heels for a massive double-strand pearl necklace by the jeweller. So in 1917, the property was traded for the necklace—the latter valued at US\$1 million at the time—plus a token US\$100.

Art in the air

Some of the art pieces in the Cartier mansion were chosen with a mind to add French twists to the otherwise mid-century American interiors. Famed French architect and interior designer Laura Gonzalez, nicknamed the queen of new maximalism, chose and commissioned art that references the brand's heritage. There's a lacquered piece by Atelier Midavaine that depicts three panthers with several interpretations: three brothers, cities or temples?

Deep in the archives

The cushion-shaped 45.52-carat Hope diamond is one of the most storied gemstones in the world. A fancy blue Golconda diamond, the Parisian house bought the stone and mounted it in 1910 as a necklace—a form it has stayed in even now while it's in the Smithsonian Institution Archives. The story goes that the diamond went from being a cursed stone to the prized possession of American heiress Evalyn Walsh McLean, who was even said to have gotten the stone blessed at a church to rid it of its bad luck.





Cartier New Bond Street

We are being hosted at La Résidence, the private lounge area of Cartier's New Bond Street flagship in London. A rare moment when this luxurious space, on the second level of the boutique, is opened to the public. This room was formerly a workshop that produced some of the most extraordinary creations with the interest of capturing the hearts of a local clientele.



The importance of pearls

Prices of pearls used to be published in the daily newspapers on a regular basis, and pearls were seen as an entry point to the society set. This precious material was particularly important for the house given its connections to aristocrats, royalty and important members of high society. Remember, too, that round, lustrous natural pearls were wildly rare and valued before cultivated pearls were invented—which explains how Cartier could trade a mansion for these jewels.

Maharajas

Cartier has an illustrious history with India. Jacques Cartier built the bridges when he travelled there in 1911, making clients of maharajas and royalty. But he made a mistake showing women's jewellery to these royals without realising that, in the Indian royal set, the men are the ones who wear the most jewellery. That realisation opened the doors to exotic, exquisite and one-of-a-kind designs. The house also minted the idea of circularity before it was a thing. Every piece of jewellery created was recorded from start to finish, right down to who the eventual buyers are. It's coming back full circle now as Cartier is reacquiring many of these prized possessions for its archives.

A moment in time

Cartier's London branch was adept at seizing the moment. In the 1920s, the house launched a revival of Egyptian designs following the discovery of Pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922. In the same decade, it also minted the Tutti Frutti style of carved gemstones thanks to Jacques Cartier's closeness to Indian royalty.



THIS PAGE
The Maharajah necklace is one of Cartier's modern masterpieces, set with a bevy of carved emeralds, rubies and sapphires in the Tutti Frutti style; the Cartier Trinity ring in its latest cushion-shaped form.

FACING PAGE,
CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE FAR LEFT
American heiress Evalyn Walsh McLean photographed with the Hope diamond; socialite Maisie Plant.

Cartier rue de la Paix

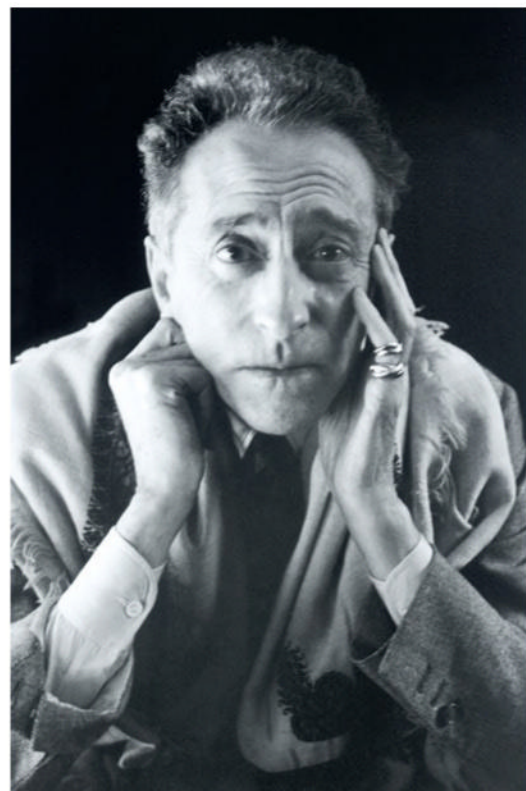
After a two-hour train ride from London, we are in Paris for Cartier's Trinity 100 pop-up. This is the final 'temple' of the brand, its flagship and home in Paris at 13 rue de la Paix. The brand's historic home was unveiled in December 2022 after two years of extensive refurbishments and renovations to its five storeys.

A century-long journey

The Trinity journey pop-up traces the iconic three-coloured metal bands, which were deemed daring and ahead of their time in 1924. With no gemstones in sight, the designs were well ahead of any minimalist movement and focused on mastering the simple shape and form of three looped rings.

All about Jean Cocteau

The French artist Jean Cocteau was a friend of Louis Cartier's, and a man about town who mingled closely with the artistic milieu of Paris in the early 20th century. There's even a historic salon in Cartier's flagship on rue de la Paix named after him. And legend has it that Cocteau might have been partly responsible for the Trinity design. It's said that the artist had a dream involving the rings of Saturn, and went to Louis asking for a design inspired by that. When Cartier unveiled the interlocking Trinity bands, Cocteau adopted the style and famously wore two on his pinkie finger.



The artist Jean Cocteau is a part of Cartier lore. He famously wore two Trinity rings on his pinkie, as pictured above, and even has a salon, pictured left, named after him at the jeweller's Paris flagship boutique.



Grace Kelly of Monaco was one of the Trinity's many illustrious wearers.



IMAGES COURTESY OF CARTIER



Trinity today

Now, introducing the latest Trinity designs. The key new pieces have been reimagined as a rounded, squared cushion cut, giving a literal edge to the three circular bands. These are offered in plain solid gold or with *pavé* diamonds. There are also XL versions imagined as bracelets, and a modular version of the ring where the three bands can be collapsed into one unified whole.

A party for a hundredth

To *fête* the centenary of the Trinity, Cartier staged a party with a host of its famous friends and ambassadors in attendance. Celebrities such as Jisoo, Paul Mescal and Yara Shahidi—who also front the collection's latest campaign—were among the many stars present. Entertainment for the night was headlined by Sia, Labrinth and Diplo, as well as the French dance collective La Horde. ●



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Jay-Z wears openworked Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Flying Tourbillon; Rihanna wears Jacob & Co. Brilliant Flying Tourbillon;
Pharrell Williams wears Richard Mille RM UP-01 Ferrari; Taylor Swift wears Lorraine Schwartz jewellery.

NEW Rules

When it comes to celebrities' bling and ice, tastes and styles have evolved.

Words GORDON NG

What is the look of success? The going trend may be the understatement of quiet luxury, but for the last few decades hip-hop artists have had the boldest, most compelling answer. Outsized, ostentatious overstatement was the name of the game. The bigger a gold watch, a curb chain or a ring was, the quicker, louder and clearer it said 'success'.

But now that a whole generation of entertainers have established themselves as pop culture icons, genre-defining artists and business moguls, so too have their tastes evolved. It's most apparent in the field of watches, which for a long time has been the only form of jewellery for men. A reigning undercurrent now is a taste for connoisseurship instead of outright flamboyance.

Complicating things

Dubbed the greatest rapper of all time by Billboard, Jay-Z is no stranger to fancy timepieces. The brand he's most closely associated with is also one that he helped raise the profile of. It's said that Audemars Piguet and its former CEO François-Henry Bennahmias introduced the rapper to the world of high watchmaking. Consider that seed fruitfully sowed. In 2006, the Swiss brand broke new ground by releasing a limited-edition Royal Oak Offshore with Jay-Z to celebrate his 10th year in music.

Now, Jay-Z's taste in timepieces appears to skew towards the highly complicated. One of the most notable watches he's been seen wearing is the Patek Philippe Ref. 6300, nicknamed Grandmaster Chime, the august house's most complicated wristwatch ever made. It has a grand total of 20 complications spread across two dials on a swivelling double-sided case.

As for contemporary Audemars Piguets that Jay-Z wears these days? Try Royal Oak QPs (*quantième perpétuel*), which are mechanical complications that tell the day, date and phase of the moon in addition to time.

Maverick style

Another hip-hop artist who has transcended entertainment to become a far larger figure in pop culture and business is Pharrell Williams. You likely think of him for his music, but today Williams occupies one of the most powerful seats in the fashion industry as the creative director of menswear at Louis Vuitton.

The artist's eclectic, insouciant sense of style carries over to his choice of watches. One high-end brand that he's an ardent fan of is the maverick Richard Mille, which makes watches that are nicknamed the 'billionaire's handshake'. The brand's design aesthetic can be polarising, but the siren song of Richard Mille that's heard by connoisseurs is one of the brand's technical wizardry.

The model that Williams has been seen wearing a lot recently is an astounding technological coup. The RM UP-01 Ferrari, a co-branded design with the Formula 1 racing team, takes a simple idea to the extreme: how thin can you make a watch? The answer is an astounding 1.75 millimetres. For reference: the international standard thickness for a toothpick is 2 millimetres. The watch is designed, despite its absurdly lithe profile, to withstand the extreme G-forces and accelerations of Formula 1.



The super skinny Richard Mille RM UP-01 Ferrari was produced as a limited edition of 150 pieces.

The highest recorded in the sport are around 6.5 Gs; Richard Mille has designed its skinny slab of horology to take on over 5,000.

Everywhere but the wrist

Watches may have been the domain of men, but that looks set to change. In the last year, women celebrities have been rocking up to red carpets and public appearances wearing watches in fresh, novel ways.

The star who kicked this off is almost certainly Rihanna. In June last year, at Williams's debut runway show for Louis Vuitton, the beauty mogul and singer wore a fully gem-set, tourbillon-equipped custom watch by Jacob & Co around her neck as a choker. Later in November, she was seen at the Las Vegas F1 Grand Prix wearing another Jacob & Co diamond-set timepiece as an anklet.

An aside: Rihanna's choice of jeweller and watchmaker is serendipitous. Jacob Arabo, the founder of Jacob & Co, built his name in the '90s and 2000s as the go-to guy for artists and entertainers seeking one-of-a-kind, larger-than-life bling. The rapper Notorious BIG gave him the nickname of 'Jacob the jeweller', and his legend is cemented in the lyrics of the rappers who shop at Jacob & Co.

Shortly after Rihanna came Emma Chamberlain, who attended a Miu Miu fashion show wearing a Cartier Baignoire around her neck at precisely the moment when interest in the oval model was surging. And at the Grammy Awards this year, the movement got an endorsement by a superstar who, until then, had nearly no reputation for an interest in watches. Taylor Swift, dressed in glamorous Schiaparelli, wore ropes of Lorraine Schwartz diamond necklaces. The crowning jewel: a triple-strand choker of black diamonds with an octagonal vintage watch as its centrepiece. ●

Material GIRL

The J12, **Chanel's** ceramic icon of watchmaking, is all grown up.

Words GORDON NG

When it launched in 2000, Chanel's J12 was something of an upstart debutante in the world of watches. It had the octagonal *Première* with its leather-laced chain bracelet. But that was a quartz cocktail watch fashioned almost as a piece of jewellery or an accessory for the wrist. The J12, by contrast, was a dip into the wider world of horology: in aesthetics, by remixing and reimagining the codes of sport (dive, specifically) watches, and in watchmaking, with an automatic self-winding movement.

But the thing about the J12 that shook the ground most was its materiality. Instead of a precious metal such as gold or the industry standard of stainless steel, the house's former artistic director Jacques Helleu chose to craft this watch out of high-tech ceramic. Lighter and more scratch-resistant than either steel or gold, the J12 became almost overnight a poster child for crafting fine watches in ceramic. It's easy to overlook its impact: look around at watches being produced today and ceramic seems a perfectly ordinary choice.

The glossy material also has a colour advantage. The first J12 came cloaked, from its case to its dial and bracelet, in distinct all black. Later and current editions are offered in white or a mix of both—the stark, two-tone palette being a signature of Chanel.

At the spry age of 24, what was once the new kid on the block can be said to have really come of age now. The brand has been rolling out an important horological update since 2019: equipping the core line-up of 33mm and 38mm models with in-house automatic movements. These, dubbed the Calibre 12.2 and 12.1 respectively for each size, are developed by the high-end Swiss manufacturer Kenissi, which Chanel has an invested stake in. As watches go, mechanical credibility of this sort is the difference between a seat at the kids' or grown-ups' table.

It's an appreciable bit of maturity for fine watchmaking at Chanel. The house had a design hit when the J12 was birthed, and while it has grown and developed in myriad ways—adding high complications and jewellery details, for example—it has also stayed, at its core, recognisably the same. It's what's on the inside that's all grown-up now. ●



Boucheron Quatre
Classique single clip
earring, Quatre Blue
Edition tie necklace
with Hyceram and
Quatre Classique
bracelet in yellow,
white and pink gold
with diamonds,
and Quatre Radiant
Edition high jewellery
bracelet in pink gold
with diamonds; Saint
Laurent by Anthony
Vaccarello dress

RING *it in*

Boucheron's four-banded Quatre turns 20 this year. With countless variations on its form, the collection is the house's modern icon of craftsmanship, imagination and stylish versatility.

Photography ZANTZ HAN Styling NICHOLAS SEE Words GORDON NG

Boucheron Quatre White Edition tie necklace, pendant necklace and rings in yellow, white and pink gold with diamonds and Hyceram, Quatre Classique ring and bracelet in yellow, white and pink gold with diamonds, and 2-Code bracelets in rose gold; Ralph Lauren Collection dress and tie

Model, An Ning/Mannequin; hair, Christian Wu; make-up, Victoria Hwang/The Suburbs Studio; nails, Ann Lim; photographer's assistant, Dennis Er; stylist's assistant, Lance Aeron Pielago.



How do you combine over a century and a half's worth of history and heritage into a design that captures both the moment and the future? That's a question you could well pose to the Parisian high jewellery house Boucheron, which did exactly that in 2004 when it introduced its Quatre collection.

Quatre, simply French for 'four', is a sublimation of house codes pieced together in an ingenious way. The design is made up of four distinct bands of gold, weighing no less than 13.88 grams total, each crafted and finished differently. One end is framed by a fluted grosgrain pattern that evokes the ribbed texture of silk ribbons. *Couture*-inspired details and designs are a rich part of Boucheron's archives thanks to its founder's legacy as the son of a draper.

Next to the grosgrain, a band of diamonds that speaks to Boucheron's innovation. The house invented a host of gem-setting techniques, and the one deployed in the Quatre is the mirror setting in which the gold base and prongs which affix the diamonds are mirror-polished to reflect light aplenty. Beside the diamonds, a line of faceted square motifs known as Clou de Paris that evokes the cobblestones of the City of Lights. First introduced in 1911, this sculptural treatment of gold is PVD-coated to add a lustrous burst of colour.

Lastly, Quatre designs are capped by a double *godron* of two rings seamlessly joined together. The technique was introduced at Boucheron in the 1860s and is meant to symbolise binding love and union.

The four distinct parts of the Quatre are joined with an extraordinary level of *savoir-faire*. There is no soldering or glueing involved. Instead, the bands are pressed together until a soft 'click' indicates that a new whole has been made.

While it began with a ring, the Quatre collection has grown over 20 years to become an icon of stylistic freedom at Boucheron. The collection today is made up of seven 'editions'. There are lines which swap the brown PVD-coated gold on the Clou de Paris band with vivid, lustrous Hyceram (a high-tech ceramic material) in colours such as red, white and blue. The Quatre design has also been translated into pendant and tie necklaces, hoop earrings and ear cuffs and even hair jewellery.

The house has also introduced a dazzling slate of novelties to mark the collection's 20th anniversary this year. Key among them is a new range of bracelets that expand the Classique ring so that it can now sit on the wrist. These bracelets come in two sizes, with the option of either the full four-band design or a simplified version dubbed the 2-Code with just the Clou de Paris and double *godron* bands. There's also a wire-style version, with two mini Quatre motifs on its ends, crafted with a blend of titanium and gold for comfort and flexibility. It's a new form, but distinctly and surely Quatre—a testament to this collection's place as a modern jewellery icon. ●

Nacred DESIRE

Edit JESSLYN LYE



- 1.** *Shaun Leane* Hooked ring, £275 **2.** *Simone Rocha* Bow Ribbon Double Drip earrings, £395
3. *Pacharee* necklace, \$640 from Net-a-Porter **4.** *Alaïa* bracelet, \$779 from Mytheresa
5. *Completedworks* Flower earrings, \$545 from Net-a-Porter **6.** *Bibi van der Velden* Crashing Waves necklace, €75,000
7. *Sophie Bille Brahe* Peggy Rosette necklace, €5,600 **8.** *Claire English* Magpie Loot ring, \$916 from Farfetch



Pearls are synonymous with innocence, purity and timeless elegance. Queen Elizabeth I was almost always painted festooned in the rare jewels to project her image as the Virgin Queen. Holly Golightly, the cinematic picture of an *ingénue*, famously wore a multi-strand choker in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*; and even Princess Diana completed her famous revenge look with a pearl and sapphire necklace. As they've enjoyed a recent resurgence in popularity, contemporary designs are now painting these dainty jewels in a new light. From embracing the beauty of irregularity in baroque pearls to embodying femininity through ribbons and florals *à la* coquette-core, these are pearls for modern times that have escaped the formality of the past. ●

The Ingénue

Fresh off her run as Karen in the latest adaptation of cult-classic film *Mean Girls*, **Avantika Vandanapu** reveals why her rise to fame has been inevitable.

Words CHANDREYEE RAY

Avantika's face card literally never declines." I am reminded of something I had recently seen a fan say about the 19-year-old actor on X (the platform previously known as Twitter) as she pops up on my Zoom screen late one afternoon. Avantika Vandanapu is dressed casually in a soft grey graphic T-shirt, her long curls cascading over her shoulders. A few face-framing strands are pinned back to reveal her arresting features.

That Vandanapu is a classic beauty is evident even through the pixelated Zoom video transmission. Impossibly long lashes fringe her large doe eyes, which crinkle adorably each time she laughs. Her naturally full lips and heart-shaped face give her an almost cherubic aura. I think to myself that she looks like an Instagram face filter come to life.

"I actually just took a temporary leave of absence from university," she shares, when I ask what's new. Giggling, she adds: "I hired this guy off Craigslist—he was so nice—to come move all my stuff out of my dorm room at 6 o'clock in the morning. I am now living with my friend's grandmother—random I know—in New York and I love it."

As an undergrad at Columbia University, Vandanapu is serious about getting an education. "I definitely want to go back to Columbia next semester. In the meantime, I'm about to enrol in community college since it has an educational system that's more flexible and that fits with my present schedule."

Vandanapu entered the film industry at the age of 10. Given how many entertainers who start their careers young end up deprioritising and eventually missing out on further education, her outlook is refreshing. She attributes it partly to the way her parents, whom she affectionately describes as semi-liberal—"I







“If I were to *reprise a character* that had been done so well before, I needed to *commit to it fully* and *not cut any corners*.”

had a crazy curfew growing up, but they also understood that societal standards of what it means to be a teenager now are very different from what they were used to—have raised her.

“My mum’s philosophy was: you can do anything you want in the world as long as you commit to it fully and are the best at it,” Vandanapu laughs. When she told her parents that she wanted to be an actor, her mother decided to leave her career in the US behind and move to India with Vandanapu to help her get a start. “She also ensured that my academics were not compromised along the way. Most immigrant parents would not have been open to the idea of their child entering this industry, but mine were determined to find a happy medium.”

Vandanapu estimates that she acted in around 10 Indian movies between the ages of 10 and 14 before she found a reason to return to Los Angeles. “We saw a post in a Facebook group that a new Disney movie was looking for an Indian lead. That was a wild idea for me at the time.”

One successful cold call and audition tape later—“They were like, we need to work on this girl, but she has something for sure,”—Vandanapu had booked the lead role of Rhea Kumar in the Disney Channel Original Movie *Spin*, marking the start of a new chapter of her career in Hollywood.

Did she expect that her move would eventually see her stepping into the role of an iconic character from one of the most popular original films in modern cinema? Her eyes widen and she shakes her head vehemently. “I was so sure that I wasn’t going to get to play Karen. When I found out that I got the part, I didn’t cry. I wasn’t happy. I just had no emotion because it didn’t feel real.”

As a fresh take on Karen in the 2024 film adaptation of the Broadway musical based on the 2004 film *Mean Girls* (yes, there are layers here), Vandanapu delivers a standout performance, earning her praise from every critic who reviewed the film and rendering her a bona fide breakout star. But sitting among thousands of enraptured viewers were two astounded parents who had to grapple with their daughter’s burgeoning young adulthood, splashed up on the silver screen for everyone to see.

“*Mean Girls* was definitely a hump in our family dynamic because I’m shown in a little bit of an older light in the film,” Vandanapu contemplates. “It’s a shock for any brown parent to watch their kid on screen doing a number like ‘Sexy’. We had many conversations and I explained to them that if I were to reprise a character that had been done so well before, I needed to commit

to it fully and not cut any corners. And they understood that telling your kid to be ambitious, but only within certain bounds, is not a realistic expectation to have.”

Vandanapu articulates her thoughts with startling clarity and speaks with a wisdom far beyond her years. Her parents have been extraordinarily supportive throughout her career—she tells me a hilarious story about her mother fearlessly knocking down a powerful producer’s door at three o’clock in the morning to ensure Vandanapu would not get short-changed in her contract—but it is her own laser focus on her craft, her killer work ethic and a rare, undefinable X factor that has gotten her this far.

As at March, she has a number of exciting projects in the pipeline. *Big Girls Don’t Cry*, a Hindi-language coming-of-age boarding school drama on Prime Video, and horror movie *Tarot* will be the first to release, showcasing different facets of her gifts as an actor. The breadth of work and diversity of roles she is racking up in her portfolio makes it difficult to pigeonhole or typecast her, and Vandanapu revels in this fact.

“You know the phrase ‘jack-of-all-trades, master of none’? I learnt recently that the full saying is ‘A jack-of-all-trades is a master of none, but oftentimes is better than a master of one’. It sums up the path I’m on. I’ve done Disney, I’ve done a musical, I’ve done horror. I’m excited to see the industry’s response to me as an actor who is able to do multiple genres,” she says.

Keen to also try her hand at producing and writing, Vandanapu shares that she has added honing those two skills to her expanding list of things to do in 2024. “Clearly, I believe there’s room for it all,” she says with a cheeky grin. “And succeeding in one gives me hope that I might succeed in another.”

For now, she is spending two blissful weeks in Hyderabad, where her extended family lives. “Pre-pandemic, I used to visit my family every year and spend my summer vacation in Hyderabad. Since I’ve started working more, it’s not realistic to set that time aside consistently. But whenever I’m in India for a shoot or a film, I try my best to see my family.”

She apologises for the background noise outside her window—“You know what the traffic here can be like, right?”—as we talk about the restorative joys of being back in the homeland. “I never do anything productive in Hyderabad and that’s the best part. I eat mangoes, nap a lot with the fan on and just chill out.” It’s a hard-earned break before the starlet dives back into work; I couldn’t wish her anything better myself. ●

Top SHELF

They say reading is dead. Enter BookTok, the online phenomenon changing the book industry as we know it.

Words JESSLYN LYE

For the uninitiated, BookTok refers to the corner of TikTok dedicated to all things literary, from book recommendations based on popular tropes to guides on how to best annotate your favourite reads. Its influence is seen not just in the massive increase in book sales of viral titles, but also in the revival of brick-and-mortar bookstores. Some readers may bemoan BookTok's leanings toward the romance and fantasy genres, but there's no denying that the phenomenon has inspired many young people to start reading again.

Who better to delve into the intricacies and impact of the community than a BookToker? Having amassed over 566,000 followers on TikTok, Alexis Anunson—or @newlynova on TikTok—has cemented her place through diverse recommendations, incisive book reviews and a wicked sense of humour. Here, the literary influencer opens up about how BookTok has enriched her reading journey.

What inspired you to start a BookTok account?

I started my account a couple of weeks after getting into a car accident in 2021. It was the same summer that I was getting back into reading as an adult and I spent a lot of my recovery reading and scrolling through TikTok. At the time, a lot of the long-form book reviews on TikTok were slow-paced. As someone with both an extremely short attention span—I have ADHD—and a decent amount of amateur video editing experience, I thought it might be cool to make the kind of videos that I wished I was seeing.

How has your relationship with reading evolved since you became a part of the BookTok community?

Everything I read now goes into my wrap-ups on TikTok and YouTube, which forces me to think critically about what I am reading. Sometimes this can feel pressurising; I read less

often to relax than I did before. But frequently, it heightens my enjoyment. I see it like running a never-ending book club—I always have somebody to talk to about how I feel about a book I am enjoying. For a hobby that is so individual, it is a treat to be able to share it with so many people.

What are some misconceptions people have about BookTok?

That it is a monolith. Someone might see a BookTok table at a bookstore and think that every creator on the platform likes and recommends the same books. This is not the case. There are so many small and mid-sized creators who have given me fantastic, off-the-beaten-trail recommendations for literary fiction, memoirs, science fiction and many other genres. Even within the stereotypical genres, there are many accounts dedicated to uplifting diversity: Black romance, queer coming-of-age stories, fantasy books inspired by East Asian mythologies.

How do you think BookTok has transformed the reading culture of today?

I am thrilled to live in a time where people, in particular women, feel comfortable talking about enjoying romance novels and other genres that have long been seen as intellectually inferior to highbrow literature. There are brilliant, layered and worthy stories in every genre. But even if somebody loves a book that is a little bit goofy, that is okay too. In almost every other form of media, it is acceptable to enjoy things that are not of pristine quality. There is a tremendous amount of love for bad action movies and so-bad-it's-good TV shows. I think the best thing that BookTok has done is make people more comfortable talking and connecting with others about the things that they like without fearing judgement. ●



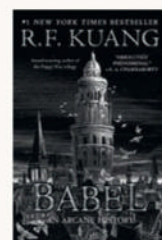
Seven Days in June by Tia Williams

"This is my all-time favourite romance novel. It's sassy, sexy and serious in equal measure."



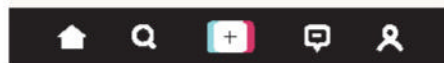
Beartown by Fredrik Backman

"A book about a small-town hockey team that will break you in half and put you back together again."



Babel by R.F. Kuang

"One of the most heart-wrenching books I have ever read and a masterclass in dark academia."





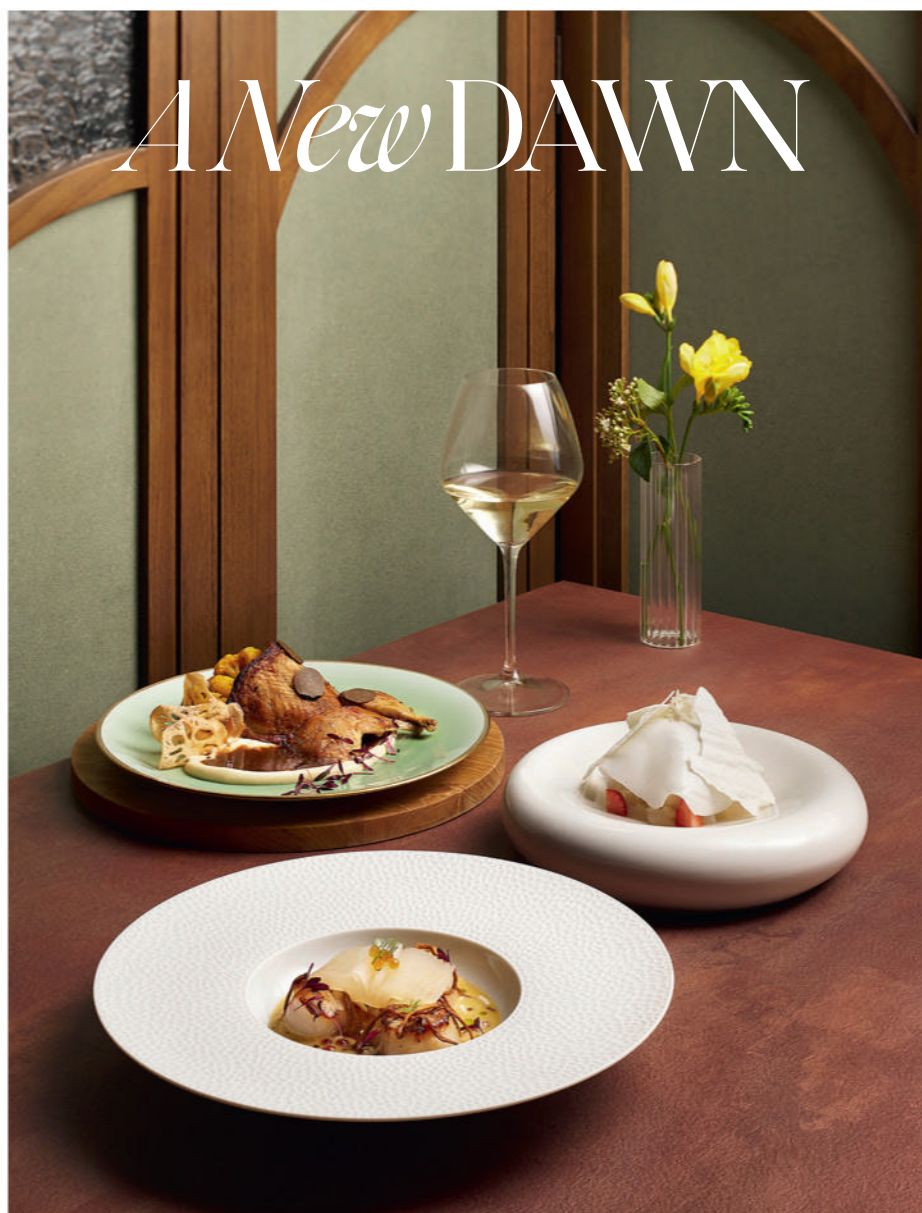
New Romantics

Achieve the coquette-core look in your home with a contemporary curation of romantic decor that embraces girlhood.

Edit JESSLYN LYE



1. *Louis Poulsen* PH 2/2 Question Mark Pale Rose table lamp
2. *Cabana x Ginori 1735* floral dinner plate, from Farfetch
3. *Saint Laurent* heart pintray in brass
4. *This Humid House* Micro-Fresh
5. *Seletti x Marcantonio Raimondi Malerba* Kintsuji small vase, from Farfetch
6. *Polspotten* Lilly candle holder
7. *Gucci* wood chair with GG bees and stars
8. *Ferm Living* Milu snack set in rose
9. *Bordallo Pinheiro* Cloudy Butterflies cake-stand, from Farfetch



Once an illustrious nightclub of the noughties, **Jiak Kim House** is now a glorious beacon for modern Asian cuisine in Singapore.

Words JANICE SIM

The year was 2004. Throngs of sweaty bodies moved to the rapid beats of Timberland and Skrillex at Singapore's hottest nightclub, Zouk. Today, the historic address is worlds apart from its rambunctious past with the arrival of Jiak Kim House, a modern Asian restaurant by The Brewerkz Group.

Past the doors of this 1920s conservation house lies a majestic vision. The edifice of the building is enhanced with a towering pediment, drawing the eye to its high ceiling. Rich terracotta hues warmly envelop the 120-seat restaurant, as ambient light fixtures and custom-made rattan furnishing work

together to conjure a space that feels like someone's home. It's a transformation that would have you digging deeper in your memories to be able to reconcile as the old Velvet Underground.

The rich history of the place undoubtedly had a major hand in influencing the interiors of Jiak Kim House. It had to be old yet new, colonial yet modern. Semblances of these are seen within vintage louvred wall panels as they lie against plush built-in banquette seating. Apart from the main dining room, the restaurant also boasts a private dining room as well as an in-house floral atelier where customised arrangements can be procured.

"We wanted a streak of heritage and old-world charm. On top of it all, we wanted it to be bold. It's a story about Singapore—of how we've come from backwater to today—from past and present," says Tan Wee Tuck, managing director of The Brewerkz Group.

Tan emphasises the importance of Jiak Kim House being reflective of Singapore and the region. It's easy to spot cultural nuances peppered everywhere, from coconut husk walls to an eclectic playlist of remastered golden hits such as local folksong 'Chan Mali Chan'.

Naturally, the food leads a similar charge, with chef-partner Seow Tzi Qin at the helm. Seow, who has worked in both Les Amis and Tung Lok Group, navigates the bridge between fine-dining and fast casual, with innovative creations that draw from local and regional influences.

Fondly remembered classics are woven into the starters. Tingkat of Memories presents delectable vignettes such as chilli crab *kueh pie tee* and *otak otak* stuffed with fresh fish paste and prawn chunks. Seow's mushroom soup carries the signature heat of *bak kut teh*. Like a latte, he serves this piquant peppery *consommé* layered with a peppercorn-infused foam in a coffee cup, as mini dough fritters make perfect accompaniments on the side.

While each main imparts its own medley of flavours, all of them convey Seow's profound understanding and appreciation of local and regional produce. The mangosteen salsa immediately springs to mind. It might be a side to the huge sambal grouper fillet, but the tropical fruit is deseeded with laborious effort, cutting through the heat from the fish with a tangy reprieve.

In the *rendang* dish, a triptych is served—short rib, ox tongue and oxtail that have been thoroughly stewed in spices and rendered fork tender. Crispy *pavé* potatoes, smoked *shishito* peppers and a fresh *rojak* salad complete the dish. On the dessert front, another local fruit, pineapple, is spotlighted in a sorbet that is infused with Moutai and covered by a silky shield of coconut jelly.

Given the F&B group's portfolio—with a fine wine merchant under its belt—one will be spoilt for choice when it comes to vino at Jiak Kim House. The restaurant's wine cellar is stocked with over 200 labels with a focus on French wine. Cold cuts, artisanal cheeses and steaks on the grill are also at the ready should you wish to enjoy a precise pairing. If there was a place to renew your treasured memories of yesteryear, Jiak Kim House would be it. ●

COMING *of* AGE

At 63, former high-powered fashion executive and viral TikTok-er **Gym Tan** has never felt younger. In an intimate letter, the Los Angeles-based Singaporean shares why it's worth doing things on your own timeline.

As told to CHANDREYEE RAY

Don't be nervous about starting late. I had my daughter at 39 and my son at 44. Being an older parent, all the new mums I hung out with were 10 to 15 years younger than me. But I didn't feel older—I felt just like them! My kids had given me a new lease on life and helped me embrace my inner child again. Imagine realising at 45 that there was so much more to life. So much more to learn and so much more fun to be had.

I met my husband much later in life too. I'd always been a career-first kind of person, but I opened up to the idea of kids when I realised what an amazing father he was going to be. We are a modern couple and we intuitively knew that we were going to be equal partners. Some years, I am the breadwinner and he takes a backseat. He'd say: "Go kill it, honey. I will take a smaller job so I can spend more time with the kids." That's the beauty of meeting your partner when you're older. You don't have that pressure of continuously needing to prove yourself.

I celebrated turning 50. It was only in my mid-50s when I began to feel a little anxiety about getting older. I would think back on the great, healthy, useful life I'd had and wondered how things would change when I hit the next decade. My background is in fashion; I've had a long career in the industry. I used to run brands as the head of product or head of design. At a certain point, I got the feeling that I was no longer the customer. In fact, the customer might have been 25 years younger than I was. But I've always been an open person, and I believe in hiring young talent and being prepared to listen to their ideas. I love to learn from them and it keeps me current.

I had some trepidation about starting social media in my 60s, but I now love the fact that I have this platform where I can talk about being my age. It allows me to show people that they don't need to be afraid of getting older. In fact, I think part of my success is the fact that I'm not a 20-something. I mean, to be on the Sephora Squad at 63! As we speak, I'm on Sephora's billboard in Times Square for Women's History Month.

Being healthy has been a game changer for me. In that vein, I've started to think about how I can affect my followers in a more positive way. Talking about healthy living has become a big part of my content. I share my exercise routines—the things I do for good balance, weight-bearing exercises to preserve bone density.

I'm going to partner with the California Department of Health to talk about Alzheimer's. My mother passed away from dementia and my father-in-law suffered from the disease, so this has definitely touched my life. I want to spread awareness about what this looks like and what actions people can take. I'm also going to be speaking on a panel hosted by a pharmaceutical company about vibrant living, to show health executives that this



Youthfulness has nothing to do with your age or your looks.

is what being in your 60s looks like now. I want to continue doing things like this to make a difference with my platform.

If I could tell you just one thing, it would be that youthfulness has nothing to do with your age. Neither does it have anything to do with your looks. For me, youthfulness means energy. Someone who is and looks very young could feel very old because they don't have vibrancy or a zest for life. And someone up there in age could have the most youthful energy in the world.

Now, I look at women who are older than me for inspiration. There are runners accomplishing things who are in their 70s. I look at them and tell myself this: when the time comes, I'm still going to be out there living my life. ●

DEEP *Cuts*

In an industry dominated by men, three female DJs in Singapore open up on the community they've found within our nightlife scene and their hopes for how it will grow.

Photography ZANTZ HAN

Styling JASMINE ASHVINKUMAR and NICHOLAS SEE

Words JESSLYN LYE

Aya

"When I'm at the booth, I'm fully myself and I can embrace all my strengths and vulnerabilities," begins Ayano Ueno.

By day, the Yokohama native is a flight attendant. By night, she takes her place behind the decks as DJ Aya—spinning for local label Midnight Shift and events collective Thugshop. "DJing is like an anchor that guides me back to myself when I feel lost. I can confront and overcome challenges without fear of failing and I'm constantly driven by my curiosity and ambition to learn and improve as an artist as well as an individual. It brings excitement and optimism into my life and it's where I can evolve and grow as a person."

Having first discovered her love for electronic dance music at raves while living in San Diego, Ueno began learning to DJ through bedroom sessions with friends after moving to Singapore for work. "It was a moment of finding my passion. I got decks and jammed by myself for hours every day."


Since then, she's played everything from the Alex Blake Charlie Sessions in Singapore to DJ streaming platform Hör Berlin. The magic of DJing, Ueno muses, stems from the connection she shares with party-goers on the dance floor through music. "The energy from the crowd has a huge impact on the journey of my set—we create the vibe of the room together. It's like an energy

exchange between me and them. I receive and absorb their energy, and send it back through the music, and vice versa."

One of her most memorable performances, she shares, was her first gig for Manifest, where she extended her set in the midst of rain and thunder. "The vibe was surreal," she reflects. "It's a privilege to have such electrifying experiences. These moments when we create something special make my day and motivate me to keep on going."

To Ueno, the community she has found in the nightlife scene is where she can be her most authentic self. "Music has been a huge part of my life and meeting people in the nightlife scene—from promoters to DJs to party-goers—has made me feel at home when I'm at the clubs. We have conversations about music of all sorts, and I love jamming and having music production sessions with friends. I'm grateful to have such a warm and loving place where everyone looks out for each other," she shares. "I hope our local nightlife scene continues growing and our community stays strong. Hopefully more people will feel that it's a special place to hold in their heart where they can be themselves."

As for what's next, Ueno shares with a smile: "I would love to be really good at playing vinyls. Maybe you'll see a vinyl-only set by me in the future. Practice makes perfect."



An Aya party, in 5 tracks

1. 'Lamella' by Zoë Mc Pherson
2. 'Maneater (Pantile Bootleg)' by Pantile
3. 'U Make Me Feel' by Baron Von Trax
4. 'Transformations' by X-Coast
5. 'Little Fluffy Clouds' by The Orb



Ueno wears Rick Owens
top and skirt from Dover
Street Market Singapore

Hautemulle wears
Johanna Parv dress from
Dover Street Market
Singapore; shoes,
stylist's own



Miss Lil

To Lilian Hautemulle, DJing, at its heart, is a method of sharing music, which has been an integral part of her life long before she stepped behind the deck. “I’m a major music enthusiast and I’ve been fortunate to architect my life around it,” she muses. Not only is she a DJ, she is also the co-founder of music collective Sivilian Affairs which she runs with her partner Sivanesh Pillai, as well as a streaming and radio manager at independent electronic music label Monstercat.

“Whether you’re playing from a DJ app on your phone or on turntables and a custom mixer, the beauty of DJing is getting to spread a sound that you find rewarding to listen to.”

The idea of DJing came to her 12 years ago when she was living in Tucson, Arizona. “I started sending tracks to my DJ friends who kept encouraging me to get on the decks. I’ve had a couple of people give me tutorials over those 12 years, but it was really a matter of timing,” she explains. “Prior to COVID-19, I had a job that had me travelling everywhere and I loved it—it was a great way to see the clubs in so many cities with such different scenes and sounds. When the pandemic hit, I was finally home long enough to give it a go. It was nice too because I had a bunch of friends, particularly girlfriends, who were getting into DJing at the same time, so we found camaraderie practising together in small at-home jams.”

The reception she has received from the nightlife community since then has been entirely warm. “I frequent a lot of

events, which means that when I emerged as a baby COVID DJ, there were a lot of familiar faces ready to support me on my journey.

And just as the local nightlife community has embraced her, Hautemulle’s goal is to give back by creating spaces and opportunities for aspiring DJs to hone their craft. Together with Wild Pearl, a dance music community and space in Pearl Hill, she is putting together a DJ crash course for non-male, non-EP holders. “We will cover foundational information like cords, equipment and mixing with the intention of creating a safe space for attendees to play around and see if this is a passion they would like to continue pursuing. We are still ironing out the details, but it’s looking like a June launch of the pilot,” she shares.

As opportunities like these open up within the nightlife industry, Hautemulle hopes that a more vibrant music scene can grow in Singapore and Southeast Asia. “There’s a hunger for new spaces where we can listen to music. There’s a shortage of dance music venues and getting licences for pop-up parties is complex,” she reflects. “Beyond just the nightlife space, I would love to see more activations across our city which include local artists. We have so many beautiful parks and community spaces that are great for daytime dance parties. Normalising music events outside and encouraging dancing could be a wonderful shift for local arts, culture and well-being.”



A Miss Lil party, in 5 tracks

1. ‘2 Tha Dance Floor’ by Liquid Earth
2. ‘Cutie - Edit’ by Shanti Celeste
3. ‘Sparkly and Bouncy is For Me?’ By Didi Han
4. ‘Divine Time’ by Aldonna
5. ‘Going On (Dub Mix)’ by Saint Guel

Tashasan

Natasha Hassan wears many hats. She is a freelance designer and illustrator, before which she spent many years working in the corporate music world. She is also the co-founder of music and party collective North East Social Club, which hosts regular DJ shows with the aim of introducing underrated sounds such as garage and UK funky to Southeast Asia. Her foray into DJing, then, feels completely natural.

“There’s a meme about experiencing a millennial mid-life crisis where you either learn how to DJ, join an intensive sport or completely change your career path. I ended up doing two of those things,” she laughs. “DJing started off as a joke, with the idea of opening for one of my parties. Over time, I realised that my song selections were becoming more than just for amusement. That’s when it hit me that this is serious.”

The affinity she found with the craft is unsurprising, given how deeply Hassan has always been entrenched in creative fields. “One of the reasons I find DJing so fulfilling is because it resonates deeply with my work as a designer. The processes involved in both fields are strikingly similar,” she shares. To illustrate, she draws comparisons between the meticulous layering required in graphic design and beat matching in DJ work, as well as the similarities between editing animations and mixing tracks. “It’s all about creating a cohesive and engaging experience.”

Beyond that, Hassan shares that DJing serves as a reminder of the role that music plays in history and culture. “What

makes DJing special to me is its inherent political nature. Within every sound played lies a piece of history waiting to be rediscovered and amplified,” she explains. “For instance, genres like dub music, which I enjoy playing, originate from reggae roots and are imbued with cultural and political significance, often serving as a form of protest music. DJing, in essence, allows me to contribute to this cultural and political dialogue, making it an integral part of my life and identity.”

And identity—in a field still dominated by men—becomes an inescapable part of the equation, especially for minority women. “We’re witnessing the rise of queer- and women-led collectives, signalling a promising move towards inclusivity. Individuals are actively creating opportunities rather than waiting for them,” muses Hassan. “As a woman and a person of colour in this space, I find myself energised by this transformation. It’s not just about breaking barriers; it’s about reshaping the narrative and creating a more inclusive nightlife community.”

As the nightlife scene in Singapore continues to evolve, Hassan hopes that acceptance and understanding will be at the forefront of growth. She concludes: “Contrary to misconceptions, nightlife is not something to be feared but rather celebrated as a vital cultural hub. Parties, at their core, are about fostering connections and building communities—a concept that holds immense significance for me. We need more spaces and support to nurture creativity and innovation within our community.” ●



A Tashasan party, in 5 tracks

1. *'Rebound X'* by Rhythm N Gash
2. *'Shurooq'* by Toumba
3. *'Darabukka'* by TSVI
4. *'Midnight Request Line'* by Skream
5. *'Weh Dem A Do (Coki - Digital Mystikz & Underground Ice Remix)'* by Mavado



Scan to listen to
the full playlists.



Hassan wears Noir Kei
Ninomiya harness and
Chopova Lowena skirt
from Dover Street Market
Singapore; top and
necklace, her own

Hair, Hazel Tan/Makeup
Entourage using Keune
Haircosmetics; make-up, Lydia
Thong/Makeup Entourage
using Make Up For Ever;
photographer's assistant,
Michelle Yap.

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POP

CHARLI XCX

Photography NICK KNIGHT
Styling KONCA AYKAN Words CHANDREYEE RAY

In her highly anticipated sixth album,
music's brattiest pop star comes home to her club girl roots.

Bottega Veneta jacket,
shirt, pants and heels





Mugler dress
and bodysuit

I read somewhere recently (and by 'read' I mean 'watched' and by 'somewhere' I mean 'TikTok') that pop music has lost all artistry. A hyperbolic statement, sure, but one not entirely untrue. Some may argue that by its very definition, popular music necessarily has to be vanilla and mass-market—devoid of any real personality or spunk. Others call it the most uninspiring of genres, paling in comparison to the anarchy of punk, the existentialism of indie or the catharsis of techno. Thankfully for the sake of pop, Charli XCX exists. In her latest album, glibly titled *Brat*, Charli makes a wild proposition: it is possible to make the kind of music that provokes thought and starts conversations, while also being so plainly good, it can't not be pop.

If the heart-pumping, synth-heavy first single, 'Von Dutch', is any indication, this album will see Charli making a swerve (as the sportscar-obsessed singer is wont to do) towards her underground club girl roots. "I came from the clubs," Charli says wistfully, during our Zoom chat. "When I first started making music, I was playing at illegal warehouse raves in Hackney in London. That's home to me."

She describes the pure electricity in discovering underground club culture in her youth, when she found fascination in everything from the brash music to the thriftiness of club kid fashion.

"I was never somebody who went to traditional clubs where you'd have to put your name on the list and there would be a line-up of DJs playing. I always found myself at warehouse parties—those really underground, last-minute, secret-location kind of events," she reminisces.

Something like her rager of a Boiler Room set in Brooklyn earlier this year, which broke the record for the most RSVPs to date, then?

"Post-pandemic, I actually think these kinds of scenes are thriving even more," Charli says bashfully, clearly uninterested in the idea of breaking a statistical record. "I've always gravitated towards those spaces because I prefer the music that's played there than in a super club. Also, they are usually started from the ground up, often by members of the queer community."

Being deeply enmeshed in the communities her music most appeals to is what gives Charli the superpower so many pop stars of today don't have. Her sheer authenticity—whether that manifests as rebellious advocacy at awards shows or casual indifference to winning those same awards—is what makes her so undeniably cool.

From shouting 'gay rights!' in viral Twitter videos to calling for a ban on conversion therapy to dedicating a single in her new album to her friend and late trans producer Sophie, Charli has found ways to use her voice in ways that matter not only to her, but to the people that predominantly make up her fanbase.

"I truly feel like I wouldn't have a career without the LGBTQ+ community," she says. "They have made so much possible for me and supported me when everyone else had given up. It feels right for me to try my best to amplify that community wherever possible. It feels very natural to me."

In the music video for 'Von Dutch', Charli is seen racing through the Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris, throwing hands at a shaking camera—"The camera was the antagonist of that video. I was lashing out at it,"—before ending up in the sky, on the wing of a jumbo jet. As the wind whips through her hair, she revels in the dangerous freedom of being on top of the world, gyrating and writhing to the music even as she's seconds away from free fall, that pesky camera never leaving her side. Suddenly, she leaps off the wing and lands on a baggage cart, bruised and battered. Personality and spunk? Check. Anarchy, existentialism and catharsis? Check, check and check.

Beyond the gritty veneer of the video, I tell Charli that the song reads to me like a soul-baring account of the dark side of being in the public eye, the perverse convolutions of fan culture, and the violating ways in which we poke and prod famous women. A fresh take on the pop star mental breakdown, if you will.

"That's an interesting interpretation," she twinkles. "It's cool that you saw it as the commodification of women within the music industry and also the fan narrative—this idea of ownership of artists by their fanbases—because, yeah, this could be me addressing all of that."

She adds: "I was thinking about the feeling we have when we're being watched. Whether it's by our peers, co-workers or >>

THIS PAGE

Bottega Veneta jumpsuit
and earrings; tights and
boots, stylist's own

FACING PAGE

Ferragamo dress;
Balenciaga boots; gloves,
stylist's own





“I was playing at *illegal warehouse raves* in Hackney when I *first started making music*. That’s *home* to me.”

“Growing up, I remember my *nani* and *bappa* cooking with *Bollywood* films playing in the background and everyone speaking *Gujarati*.”

>> even our sort of frenemies. You know how sometimes you just feel like someone’s watching your every move? This song is me saying, well, if you want to watch, I’m going to give you a show.”

Even for someone so keenly scrutinised, one thing many don’t know about Charli is her multiracial heritage. “My mum is Indian and she was born in Uganda. Her family eventually moved to the UK where she married my dad, who is white,” she shares.

“I grew up in two half-lives, I suppose. When I would go and visit my mum’s family, I felt very Indian. It was all the classic scenes of my *nani* and *bappa* cooking with Bollywood films playing in the background and everybody speaking in Gujarati.

“But then I’d go home to this other world which was largely white. It was almost like I would experience the Indian part of my identity only on the weekends. I never quite felt like I fit into either world, which I think commonly happens with mixed-race kids.”

It didn’t help that, at the time, the mainstream media representation for Indian characters was limited to the stereotypically written Apu from *The Simpsons*. “There were a lot of jokes from my schoolmates about corner shops and things like that. But also, my grandparents actually did have a corner shop. So it was very confusing, you know?” Charli laughs.

She also confides that she was bullied in school for her unibrow—I shriek, since she has one of the best sets of eyebrows in Hollywood right now—which is a rite of passage for any Indian kid growing up abroad. Eventually, of course, once we are all grown up, everyone envies the same features they once made fun of.

“You’re totally right. I was also teased for my frizzy hair. Now, everyone is always complimenting me on my hair and eyebrows. So to all the people who made fun of me, the joke’s on you I guess,” Charli says.

From album art to track list, *Brat* is geared to be a high-octane, aggressive record that serves as voyeuristic commentary on pop culture while also functioning as its own subject. “This album is going to be confrontational,” Charli says with a grin.

Even the album cover—a low resolution green square with the word *brat* disproportionately imposed on it—apparently made some people mad. “They were like, ‘Why isn’t she going to be on the cover? She needs to be on the cover.’ Why should anyone have that level of ownership over female artists?”

The colour choice was also a layered one. Green, in Charli’s view, has been heavily oversaturated in the media and fashion as of late. “I wanted to go with an offensive, off-trend shade of green to trigger the idea of something being wrong. I’d like for us to question our expectations of pop culture—why are some things considered good and acceptable, and some things deemed bad? I’m interested in the narratives behind that and I want to provoke people. I’m not doing things to be nice.”

Still, this won’t stop the pop star from showing her softer side. Charli reveals that while the album might be aggressive as a whole, much of its lyricism is confessional and almost vulnerable in comparison.

“Lyrically, this is quite a different record for me. I’ve written the songs almost in the way I would write texts to my friends or based on things I would say to them on FaceTime. We talk a lot about pop culture and music and it’s been really fun to gossip about the songs we go. They’ll ask ‘Oh, who is this one about? Is this about a friend? Is it about an ex?’ It has fuelled this fun, gossipy narrative which permeates the album.” Talk about group chat material.

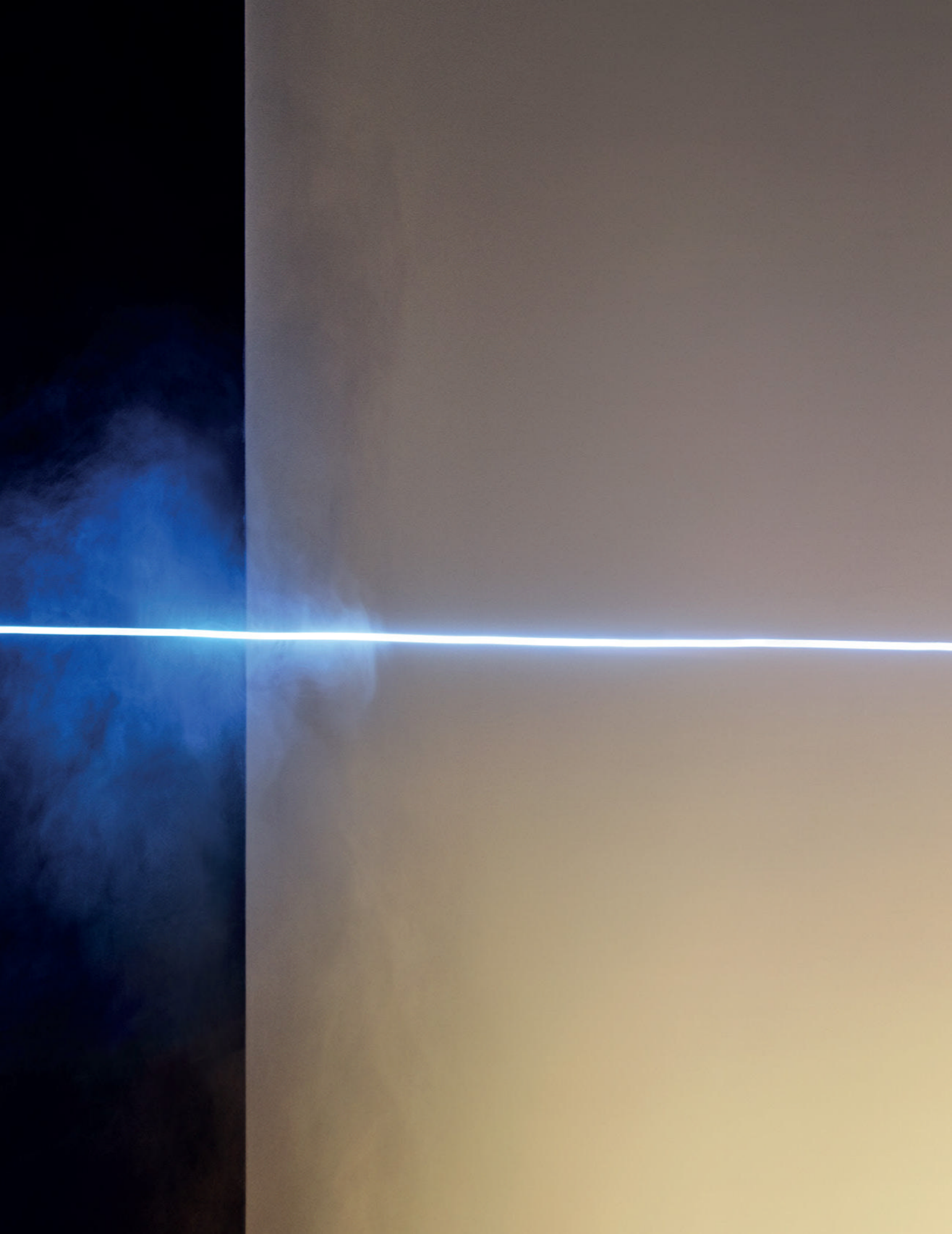
The pop star has a banner year coming up, not only with the release of her sure-hit album but multiple film and television projects—following in the tracks of her breakout song ‘Speed Drive’ from the *Barbie* soundtrack last year. Alongside co-executive producing the score for the A24 film *Mother Mary* with Jack Antonoff and making original music for Benito Skinner’s Prime Video series *Overcompensating*, Charli will take an exciting turn starring in Daniel Goldhaber’s remake of 1978 cult-horror film *Faces of Death*. A second act as a scream queen? Seems more than a natural fit for the dark princess of pop.

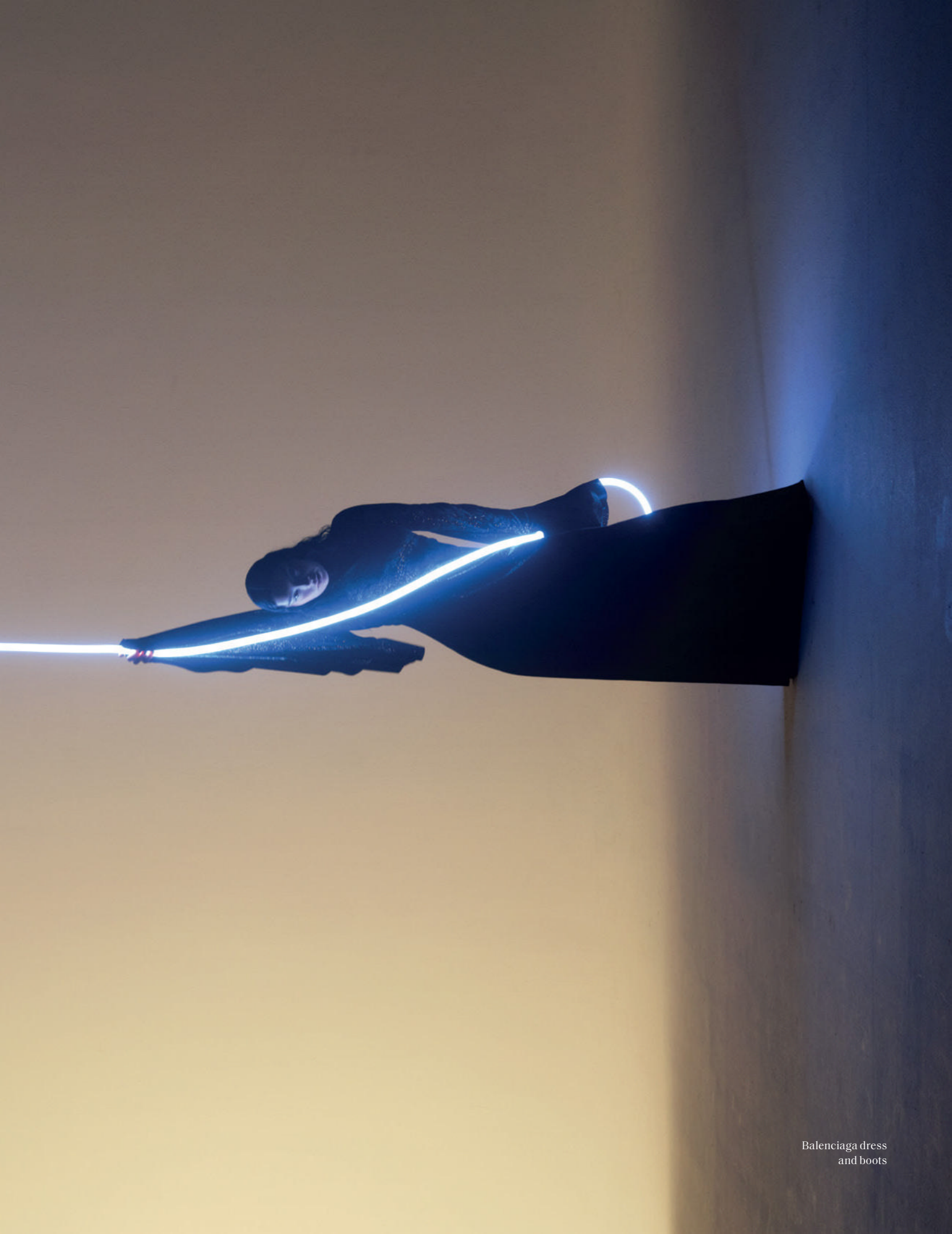
At the end of our chat, I confess to Charli that I hadn’t properly been clubbing since the pandemic started. Maybe I just needed to be inspired—what did her current night-out routine look like?

“You know what? My favourite thing to do before I go out is to get in an SUV and play music really loudly, and just drive. We’ll take the long way there with the music blasting. That somehow becomes my favourite part of the night.” I’ll take it—if there’s anyone I could trust to make clubbing great again, it’d be Charli XCX. ●



Mugler dress
and bodysuit





Balenciaga dress
and boots



THIS PAGE
Bottega Veneta dress
and heels

FACING PAGE
JW Anderson dress;
Hugo Kreit earrings;
Bottega Veneta heels

Hair, Soichi Inagaki/Art Partner;
make-up, Lauren Reynolds/
Bryant Artists using Suqqu;
manicure, Adam Slee/Streeters;
set designer, Andrew Tomlinson/
Streeters; tailor, Linards Augusts;
casting, Jill Demling/Creative
Casting Agency; photographer's
assistants, Grace Hodgson,
Madison Blair, Jed Barnes and
Trudi Woodhouse Treble; digital
operator, Sun Lee; stylist's
assistants, Samela Gjozi, Izzie
Jones; hairstylist's assistant,
Masayoshi Fujita; make-up
artist's assistant, Matilde Ribau;
set designer's assistants, Bradley
Barrett and Alfie McHugh; set
construction, Ben Robotham, Cal
McGarrity; producers, Jasmine
Ashvinkumar and David Bay;
on-set executive producer, Kat
Davey/Liberte Productions;
production co-ordinator, Jared
Pasamer/Liberte Productions;
production assistants, Jordan
Kilford, Johnny Faulkner
and Nicole Ready/Liberte
Productions; studio, Park Royal
Studios; lighting, Direct Lighting;
retouching, Epilogue Imaging.





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Photography RICE TAN Styling NICHOLAS SEE

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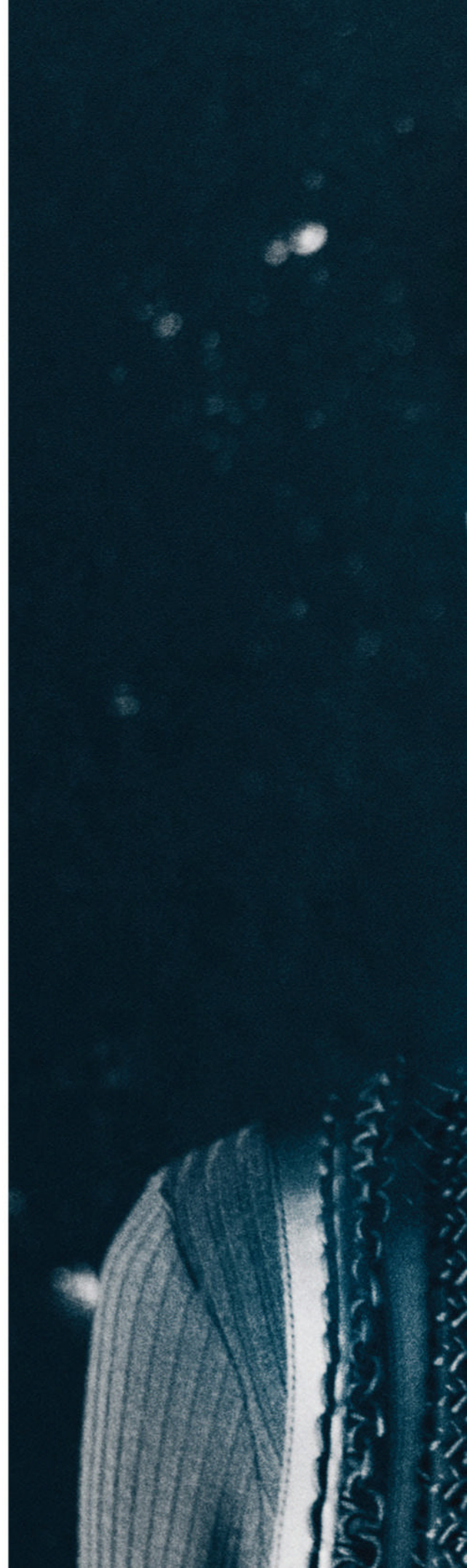
Loewe Paula's Ibiza dress, sunglasses and heels; Fangophilia rings; boa, stylist's own





THIS PAGE Loewe Paula's Ibiza dress and boots; Fangophilia rings; ear cuff and socks, stylist's own; artist, Waft Lab
FACING PAGE Ferragamo cape

Noir Kei Ninomiya vest
from Dover Street Market
Singapore; Helmut Lang
turtleneck from Milieu;
Ask & Embla ear cuffs







THIS PAGE Loewe Paula's Ibiza top and shorts
FACING PAGE Hermès bra and skirt; Burberry heels; Peter Do gloves from Milieu; Ask & Embla earring, bangles and ring

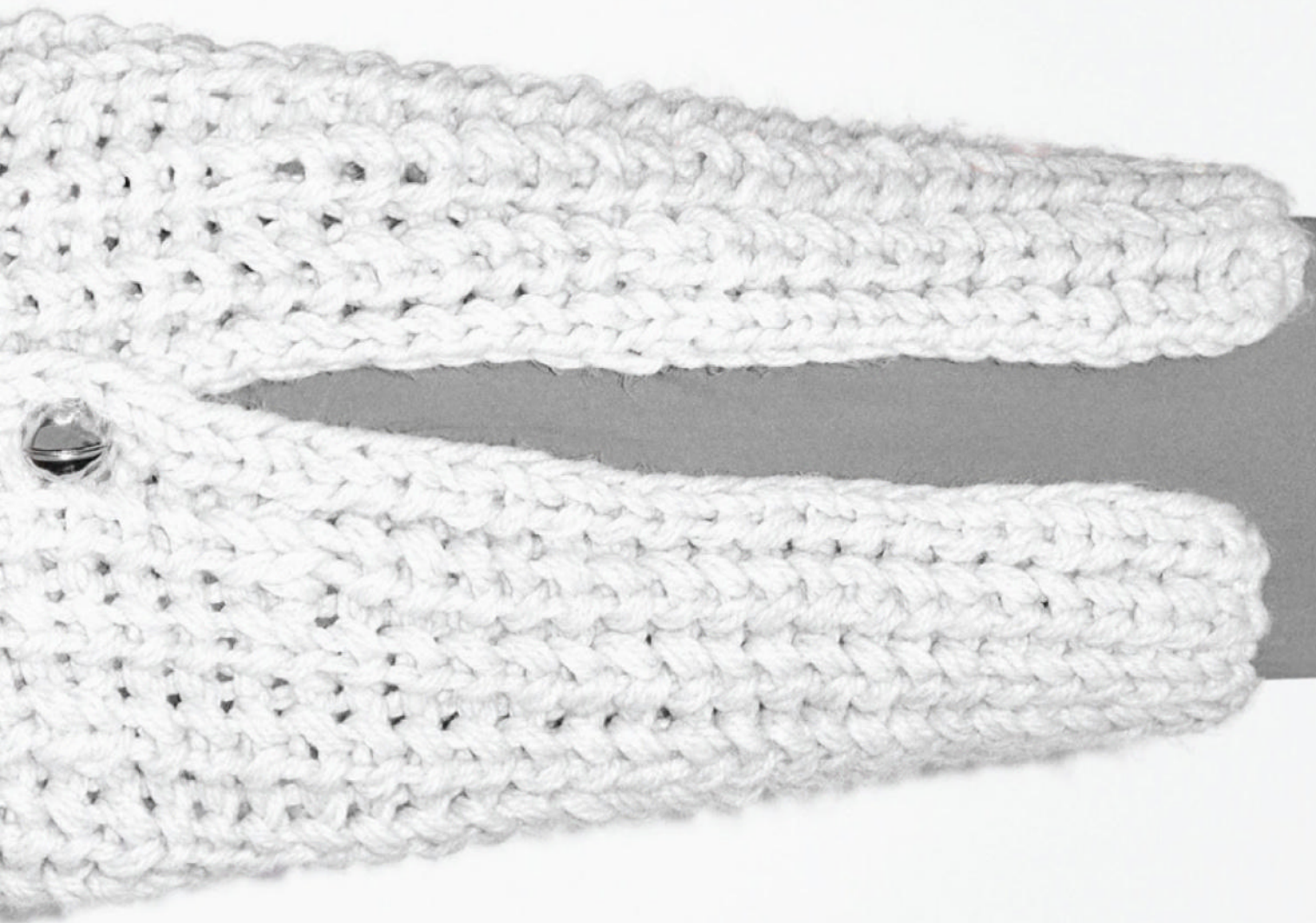








Loewe cardigan; &
Other Stories skirt







Fendi dress; Ask & Embla earring, lip ring and ring

Hair for Palmy, Chanya Chumpalee; hair for Aslesha, Yuhi Kim; make-up for Palmy, Wanit Dejeradon; make-up for Aslesha; Kenneth Chia using Gucci Beauty; manicure for Palmy, Lunar Nail Cafe - Pattaya; manicure for Aslesha, Rebecca Chuang; producer, David Bay; photographer's assistants, Nicholas Yan and Bernice Ng; stylist's assistants, Elden Zachery, Sophie Tan and Krittta Thongthawat; models, Palmy/ Akiz Management and Aslesha/Ave Management.

CHARLI'S *Playlist*

Missed her jam-packed Boiler Room set? Don't fret. Our cover star rounds up an exclusive track list so you can recreate a Charli XCX party right from your living room.



A Charli XCX Party

1. *'Track 10'* by Charli XCX
2. *'Volv'* by Yung Lean
3. *'Blinded by the Lights'* by The Streets
4. *'Faceshopping'* by Sophie
5. *'Pursuit'* by Gesaffelstein
6. *'Boom Boom Pow'* by The Black Eyed Peas



Scan for the full playlist.

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[^]SELF ASSESSMENT, 106 WOMEN, 4 WEEKS



LOUIS VUITTON